THE ROYAL NAVY

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THE ROYAL NAVY

PAINTED BY NORMAN L. WILKINSON · DESCRIBED BY H. LAWRENCE SWINBURNE

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WITH SOME NOTES ON THE COSTUME OF THE SAILORS OF THE PAST BY COMMANDER CHARLES N. ROBINSON R.N. · ILLUSTRATED BY J. JELLICOE

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AMONG THE MEMORIES OF A SOMEWHAT VARIED CAREER, NONE ARE MORE PLEASANT THAN THOSE OF A PERIOD IN WHICH THE WRITER HAD THE HONOUR OF ACTING AS PRIVATE SECRETARY TO

ADMIRAL THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD

CHARLES WILLIAM DE LA POER BERESFORD,

G.C.V.O., K.C.B.,

AT PRESENT COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE CHANNEL FLEET.—TO THAT TRUE IMPERIALIST, PATRIOTIC STATESMAN, GALLANT SEAMAN, ABLE ADMIRAL, AND MOST CHIVALROUS AND KINDLY GENTLEMAN, THESE PAGES ARE, BY PERMISSION, RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

"Fair is our lot—O goodly is our heritage!
(Humble ye, my people, and be fearful in your mirth!)
For the Lord our God Most High
He hath made the deep as dry,
He hath smote for us a pathway to the ends of all the Earth!"

RUDYARD KIPLING.

So sings the great poet of Imperialism, and to tell of how we won to that heritage, and to describe that right arm of the Empire by which we hold it, has been the aim in writing the following pages. In the first chapter is given a brief sketch of the beginnings from which the Empire's sea power has sprung, the period covered being from the time of Alfred the Great to the creation of the Tudor Navy. Although "King's Ships" were established as far back as the reign of King Alfred, and mayhap even earlier, the Tudor Navy is essentially the root from which the Royal Navy of to-day has sprung. As Julian

Corbett so admirably states it—"The conspicuous technical feature of the maritime revolution which in the sixteenth century transferred the focus of the naval art from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic is the transition from galley warfare to warfare under sail; and the history of that transition, of its causes, its development, and its results, is the history of the rise of the English naval supremacy." In describing successively the Tudor Navy, the Navy of the Commonwealth, and the early Georgian Navy, the object has been not only to tell the sea story of the three centuries that preceded the wars of the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras, but also to trace the development of the *personnel* and material of the Navy throughout that time. To show, in fact, how the Royal Navy, both as regards seamen and ships, had reached to the form it had assumed when Howe, St Vincent, Nelson, and their glorious shipmates and fleetmates finally established Great Britain as Mistress of the Sea. The next two chapters are devoted to the "great wars" that were waged from 1795 to 1815, those of the revolutionary and Napoleonic period. At my urgent request, Mr John Leyland, whose knowledge of the naval history of the period is that

of one who has devoted much laborious study to it, has covered the century that elapsed between the Peace of Utrecht, 1713, and Napoleon's second abdication and the Peace of Paris, 1815, and Chapters IV., V., and VI. are entirely his work. To that good friend I am under a very deep debt of gratitude, for not only has he probably imparted to these pages whatsoever of value they may possess for the naval historian, but in undertaking the task of writing the chapters referred to he did so at some considerable inconvenience to himself. The period of the "long peace" that saw the commencement of the transition from wood and sails to steel and steam, which was the great feature of the nineteenth century, is then dealt with, the events described ranging from the Bombardment of Algiers, in 1816, to the close of the second China War in 1860: and then, in Chapter VIII., is traced the growth of the Navy of steel and steam that to-day safeguards the Empire, and its services sketched from the New Zealand War of 1860–64, to the close of the strenuous fighting in South Africa and China with which the last century ended, and the bringing to a successful issue, of which was, in both cases, in the main due to our sea power and the superbness of the

personnel through which it comes into action. To the Royal Navy of to-day the last two chapters are devoted; the one describing the character and uses of the material of the fleet, its armaments, and its organisation for war; the second dealing with the constitution, training, and administration of its *personnel.* Finally, my friend Commander Charles Napier Robinson, R.N., has contributed an excursus on naval costume, which must greatly enhance the value of the book to the student of naval history, for on this subject the author of *The British Fleet* is our greatest authority. To him also I would beg to tender my most grateful thanks.

The text, however, would be but an inadequate medium to bring home to the reader what the Navy of old was, and the Navy of to-day is like, were it not for the reproduction of Mr Norman Wilkinson's beautiful series of water-colours with which the book is illustrated. Apart altogether from their artistic value, which is of the highest, their accuracy and completeness in detail speaks volumes for Mr Wilkinson's technical knowledge of the Royal Navy and of naval history. The whole development of the various types of warship that go to make up a modern navy can be clearly

traced in this superb gallery. The "long ships" King Alfred led against the Danes; the picturesque structures of the Norman and Plantagenet periods; the craft that Drake and his compeers led against the Spaniard; those that Blake and other heroes fought in, what were perhaps the most stubborn of all our sea fights, those with the gallant Dutch; the stately frigates and line-of-battleships that followed Hawke into Quiberon Bay, Rodney off Dominica, Howe on the "Glorious First of June," St Vincent in the great battle that won him his earldom, Duncan on the treacherous Dutch coast, the immortal Nelson at the Nile and Trafalgar; every type of the present day, from the submarine to the mightiest battleship, are all here depicted. The whole development of the warship from the days of Alfred the Great to those of Edward the Seventh is thus pictorially delineated, and in so doing Mr Wilkinson has not contented himself with simply painting a series of typical warships but illustrates for us some of the most glorious achievements and exploits of our forefathers, and those incidents in the fleet life of the Navy of to-day that the landsman has but rare opportunities of witnessing. In his work Mr Norman Wilkinson has been both historically and artistically successful;

and, moreover, he has had the advantage of having his seascape and illustration of the material of the fleet most ably supplemented by a series of sketches in colour from the brush of Mr J. Jellicoe, depicting the costume of the seaman from the earliest days to the present. These most delightful sketches give a human interest both to the text and Mr Wilkinson's pictures that would otherwise be lacking. Their absolute accuracy is assured from the fact that they are reproduced from Commander Robinson's collection of prints and pictures illustrative of the social side of sea life, probably one of, if not the most complete, that has ever been brought together.

HENRY LAWRENCE SWINBURNE.

SAVILE CLUB,
November 1907.

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By J. JELLICOE

THE ROYAL NAVY

CHAPTER I

THE DAWN OF OUR SEA POWER

If there be one truth writ plain on every page of English history, it is that embodied in the preamble to the Naval Discipline Act, better known as the "Articles of War": "It is on the Navy, under the good providence of God, that our wealth, prosperity, and peace depend." The island position of the mother-land, which is the hub of the Empire; its absolute dependence on oversea supply, not only for the raw material of its manufactures, but for the bulk of its food-supplies; the fact that its world-spread units are knit into "one Imperial whole" solely by maritime communication—all go to show that the one factor that must govern all organisation for Imperial defence is the necessity for adequately maintaining our sea power. The

security of the Empire always has been, is to-day, and for ever will be dependent on the upkeep in due strength and perfect efficiency of our "far-flung battle line," the Royal Navy. Macaulay points out to us that "nothing in the early existence of Britain indicated the greatness she was destined to attain"; but even from the earliest days our forebears seem to have had a glimmering of those potentialities of sea power, the axioms of which were to be first scientifically formulated by Captain Mahan in the last decade of the nineteenth century; for the ancient British name of Britain was "Clas Merdin," or "sea-defended green spot." The nautical element has always underlain our national characteristics; it but wanted development. All through our history there has been the effort to establish and maintain sea power—fitful at times, but always latent, and waiting but right direction and proper organisation to arrive at a glorious fruition. The reign of Alfred the Great, if not the absolute commencement of sea enterprise on the part of the inhabitants of this island of ours, is at any rate a convenient landmark from which to commence a story of the Navy; for it was during the period that lies between the accession of Alfred the Great and the vesting of the sovereignty of the

realm in the House of Tudor that the people of England were being welded into a nation, and that the weapon with which they were to fight out their destiny was being forged. Alfred was the first British sovereign to command his fleet in sea battle, and the first to build and systematically organise a war fleet; thereby showing that he had grasped the fundamental fact that the rampart of defence to an island race lay on the sea that lapped their shores, and that their only adequate protection lay in an efficient navy.

Alfred succeeded his brother Ethelred in 871, but it was not until he had by his victories over the Danes secured at any rate temporary peace for the territory over which he held sway, that he devoted his attention to providing permanent security from foreign attack in the shape of a fleet. One of the chief marks of Alfred's genius lies in the fact that he was his own naval architect. As Campbell says of him, "he had made himself master of the principles of shipbuilding, and knew how to vary the form in constructing vessels, so as to fit them for different uses and services: which, if the ignorance of those times were half so gross as modern writers are willing to represent, was certainly a very great and wonderful discovery. . . .

His naval architects might be, and in all probability were, men of as great skill and extensive capacities as any of their time; but then their knowledge was of a very different nature from that of the king: they might be great artists in their way, but were still mechanics." The type of craft that conveyed the Saxon raiders oversea were simply undecked row-boats, somewhat high at prow and stern, and fitted with a pole mast carrying a single square sail. They could accommodate some fifty or sixty men, and were specially built for beaching. The ships of the Danes were of the same type, but developed into somewhat more sea-going and habitable vessels, and the larger ones were fitted with light removable half-decks. A typical craft of this kind, found in Jutland, is seventy-five feet long, with a beam of ten and a half feet, and was apparently intended to be propelled by twenty-eight oarsmen. Alfred's vessels were akin in type, but vastly superior in design and sea-worthiness to the latter, as is evident from the description of contemporaries:—"Full nigh twice as long as the others; some had sixty oars, some had more; they were both swifter and steadier and also higher than the others; shapen neither like the Frisian nor the Danish, but so as it seemed to him that they would be most efficient."

SHIP OF THE TIME OF ALFRED THE GREAT

Campbell seems to think that they were of a type akin to the "galleys" of the Mediterranean; and as Alfred had twice visited Rome, though only as quite a child, it may be that dim recollections of the craft that he had seen in the port of the Tiber aided him when he came to work out the designs of what were known as the "king's ships"—built primarily for war, though hired out for trading purposes in time of peace—and which may fairly claim to be the earliest vessels in a "Royal Navy." In the very year that the earliest "king's ships" were launched, they swept the South Saxon coast clear of pirates, destroying no less than twenty of these hornet-craft, and putting their crews to the sword; and in 885 his fleet inflicted a signal defeat on the Danish invaders off the Essex coast. Alfred, however, was not invariably successful in the long-protracted naval warfare; but experience was being gained, the importance of sea power becoming more and more recognised, and a love of maritime enterprise was being engendered in the characteristics of the race. So much, indeed, was the latter the case, that Alfred sent out several expeditions for the purposes of discovery and commerce. Other, a native of Heligoland, searched, "by the King's procurement," for a north-east passage,

surveyed the coasts of Norway and Lapland, and brought home much knowledge of those countries and their inhabitants. Wulfstan, an Englishman, also journeyed northwards. Sigelmus, a Latin priest, and afterwards Bishop of Sherburn, actually rounded the Cape of Good Hope on a mission to the Indies, and brought back commodities of that country—or at least we are so told by William of Malmesbury; and, as Campbell very cogently argues, there is nothing very inherently improbable in the truth of the story. Alfred died in 901, and before his death he had fully manned, or "in commission," as we would to-day term it, a fleet of one hundred and twenty vessels, strategically disposed in squadrons for the defence of his coasts.

Edward the Elder (son) and Athelstan (grandson) followed the lead of the great Alfred, and the latter gave special encouragement to maritime enterprise by the enactment of a decree ordaining that every merchant who had made three voyages on his own account should be raised to the rank of thane, the claim to which exalted rank had heretofore lain in nobility of birth and the ownership of large landed estates. During the three succeeding reigns the Navy declined; but Edgar, who ascended the throne more than half a century after Alfred's death,

is, rightly or wrongly, credited with having assumed the title of "King of the Seas"; and he certainly may claim to have been the originator of "naval manœuvres" as an annual exercise for the fleet, for he divided his navy into three squadrons—one on the north, another on the east, and another on the south coast—and required them annually to circumnavigate his kingdom. Even his unworthy successor, Ethelred the Unready, made spasmodic efforts at consolidating the sea power that Alfred had brought into being, and amongst the ordinances of his reign was one that laid on every possessor of a certain quantity of land the duty of building a ship. The eventual triumph of the Danes and the accession of Canute are worthy of note from a naval point of view, for it was in no small degree owing to the fleet that he became chosen king, the crews of the ships electing in his favour. Canute was King of Denmark and Norway as well as of England, and his English fleet was of no little use to him; for in 1027 he sailed with fifty ships and drove out Olaf, who had usurped the sovereignty of his northern realm. Two years later he also used his fleet in conjunction with land operations against Scotland, forcing Malcolm II., then king, to submit to his terms. Under neither of Canute's two sons,

who in turn succeeded their father, was there any development of maritime energy; but the historian's account of a galley which Earl Godwin presented to Hardicanute, shows that ships had considerably increased in size—the craft in question was propelled by eighty rowers, as against the sixty employed in Alfred's big ships—and were consequently superior in seaworthiness and habitability, and could carry larger fighting crews. When the Saxon line again resumed the throne, naval supremacy once more played a part in the history of events; for the mere fitting out of a powerful fleet in the Channel deterred Magnus, King of Norway, who was a claimant to the throne, from any military attempt at the enforcement of his claim. During the brief reign of Harold II. the all-importance of sea power was again in evidence. Whilst Harold was winning his brilliant victory at Stamford Bridge over the forces of his rebellious brother Tostig and Harold Hardrada, the King of Norway, the latter's son Olaf was being decisively beaten by Harold's ships, and only secured a safe return to Norway by the surrender of the greater portion of his fleet. Despite this fact, however, the fleet made no attempt to check the simultaneous Norman invasion, and three days after the battle of Stamford Bridge William

had, unopposed, led his thousand transports across the Channel, and landed the flower of Normandy in Pevensey Bay. The inactivity of Harold's fleet had altered the destiny of the realm, and one more proof was given that only by sea power can the security of England be maintained. Four successive invasions—the Roman, the Saxon, the Danish, and the Norman—had all ended in the triumph of the invader, for the lesson that only on the sea could our coasts be protected had never been properly learnt. That truth, learnt at last, was to bear fruit over five centuries later, when a fifth invasion, again by men of Latin race, was to meet its fate in the storm-beaten seas that defend our islands. Never since William the Conqueror stumbled and fell on the beach of Pevensey Bay has the foot of the invader trod English soil as the conqueror of the race.

Under the rule of the four kings of the House of Normandy the fleet was again neglected, and the reason is not far to seek. It is true that, shortly after William's assumption of the throne, he had to resort to the old-time plan of bribery to divert a descent by a fleet of the Northmen, and that, taking warning from the experience, he so far consolidated his naval strength that no danger from

this quarter was to be feared; but the fact that the Norman kings were also the possessors of large dominions across the Channel rendered safe from invading attack the most vulnerable part of his island kingdom. We must therefore pass to the period of the House of Plantagenet when the death of Stephen, in 1154, left Henry II. in undisturbed possession of the English throne. To the monarch who not only was King of England, but owned the whole sea-board of France from Calais to the Pyrenees, it was but natural to get together a navy, and to utilise to the full the maritime spirit of the English; and, but little more than a century after the battle of Hastings, his maritime ascendancy, bloodlessly acquired, not only rendered the island and continental territory he governed immune from attack, but enabled him to invade and add Ireland to his dominions. The naval power Henry had consolidated was utilised by his successor in that rescue of the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the Saracen on which the lion-heart of Richard was set; and for the attainment of his object he in April 1190 collected at Dartmouth a fleet of two hundred and fifty vessels, he himself proceeding overland to assume the command of this great armada on its arrival in

Mediterranean waters. Contrary winds, however, throughout the whole summer, so delayed the progress of the enterprise that it was not till the April of the following year that Richard had assumed command at Messina, and had sailed with his fleet for the coast of Syria. This in itself is proof of the cumbrousness and unseaworthiness for long ocean voyages of the ships of the period; but, such as the fleet was, all contemporary writers concur in describing it as one of unsurpassed magnificence, though as a matter of fact the best of Richard's ships was vastly inferior to many of those of the Saracen. A brief description of Richard's fleet will best give an idea of the extent to which naval architecture had by now developed. The fleet comprised thirteen "dromons" or "very large busses," one hundred and fifty smaller "busses," fifty-three large "galleys," and the remainder "galliasses" and other light craft. The "busses," in which the main part of the troops were carried, were bluff-bowed, heavily built craft, whose bulging sides had a great "tumble-home," and were, indeed, more in the nature of transports than ships of war. They were single-masted, and were steered by a wide-bladed oar worked over that quarter which is on the right side of the ship as the steersman

faces the bow, thus giving to that side of the ship the name of starboard (steer-board), which survives to this day. The "dromons" are described as having a "threefold expansion of sails," and were long, swift ships. The best fighting ships were the galleys, driven by oars, but fitted with a pole mast —long, narrow vessels with high bows and sterns, on which, prior to going into action, fore and aft "castles" were fitted, in which the fighting men took station. They were, in fact, but a more developed type of the Saxon and Danish craft. Off Cyprus the fleet encountered a heavy gale, in which several ships were lost. The ship which contained Berengaria of Navarre, Richard's affianced wife, was treated with contumely when seeking shelter at Limasol, and also the crews of such ships as were wrecked on the Cyprus coast. In retaliation, Richard occupied Cyprus, imprisoned Isaac, the so-called emperor, and exacted heavy compensation in money and land. On the 5th June, Richard, in his favourite galley, the *Trench-the-Mer*, again led his fleet, now augmented to two hundred and fifty-four ships and more than sixty galleys, eastward. Off Beyrout a strange craft of enormous size was sighted—so large, in fact, that the chronicler of the fight describes it as "a ship

than which, except Noah's Ark, none greater was ever heard of." She was the Saracen *Dromunda*, and is described as in appearance like a "floating castle," three-masted, and carrying on board one thousand five hundred men, Greek fire in abundance, and—curious armament for a war-ship—"two hundred most deadly serpents for the destruction of the Christians." Time and again the English galleys attempted the boarding tactics then in favour, but her lofty sides baffled them; though once the Englishmen reached the deck, only to be driven back again by sheer weight of numbers. At last the men of the *Trench-the-Mer*, leaping overboard, succeeded in some fashion in fouling the rudder of their huge antagonist. Then, helpless as she was for manœuvring, a simultaneous charge was made on her by the galleys; and, pierced in a dozen places by their sharp prows, the great craft heeled slowly over and sank, taking to the bottom of the Mediterranean with her all but some fifty of her crew, to say nothing of the "two hundred serpents," which are specially mentioned in the casualty list.

John's reign offers but little of naval interest, but even this most unlovable of English kings may be credited with taking some pride in our naval

sovereignty; for, early in his reign, he, with the consent of the peers at Hastings, enacted that his commanders at sea should seize as lawful prize all ships failing to strike to the royal flag, whether or not the state to which the ship belonged was at peace with England. It would appear, moreover, that this claim to salute was no new departure, but merely the renewed assertion of an old right. There was also one naval incident in his reign that deserves passing mention. When the king was under papal interdict, and Philip of France was preparing for invasion, a surprise attack was made by the Earl of Salisbury on a large French fleet collected in or near the Flemish port of Damme. The French ships were in great part denuded of their crews, and completely unready for action, and the result was that a large number were destroyed or captured, and of the remainder the bulk were fired by the French themselves, to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. At the death of John, Prince Louis, the son of Philip, to whom the throne had been offered by the revolting barons, was in England with his forces; and though, in May 1217, he had been defeated at Lincoln by the adherents of the young king, Henry III., yet his forces were still in the field and awaiting the

reinforcements that were *en route* to him from France. To prevent the arrival of these reinforcements was to be the task of English pluck and seamanship. Hubert de Burgh, the Warden of Dover Castle, was the hero who led the enterprise. His first summons was to the Bishop of Winchester and his knights; but neither the cowardly prelate nor his following were desirous of either glory or a watery grave. However, the men of the Cinque Ports never failed him. Hastings, Winchelsea, Hythe, Rye, Romney, and Sandwich, as they then were, gave him of their best; and though in numerical strength his fleet was but small, as compared to his enemy, yet its *personnel* was composed of the bravest fighters and the most skilled mariners that then sailed the seas. On August the 24th the French fleet sailed from Calais under the command of a famous rover, Eustace the Monk, whose very name had for long been a terror to the southern coasts. His fleet comprised over eighty ships, packed with troops and laden with munitions of war. Hubert, when he sighted his foe off the North Foreland, had with him but sixteen large ships, and twenty smaller craft. To deceive Eustace, Hubert laid his course as if making for Calais—a proceeding that gave no alarm to

the Frenchman, as he knew that place to be well defended. But, in "keeping the luff" as he was doing, De Burgh had no intention of cross-raiding with Calais as his objective. He knew the game too well for that. He was, in fact, executing a manœuvre which many a time later brought British ships off successful over a numerically superior foe; for he was but getting the weather-gage of his enemy. This gained, the English ships eased helm and swept down large before the wind on the rear of Eustace's armada. First, a shower of arrows from the decks of the English; then, as they neared, a hurtle of stones from the tops; and—ingenious device—showers of quicklime, which, as they were to windward of their foes, they could use with great effect. Ship after ship was captured by boarding, others sunk by the deadly prows of the galleys, till but fifteen of Eustace's fleet escaped by an inglorious flight. Eustace himself was at first thought to have escaped, until he was at length found cowering in the hold of his own ship, where he received his death-blow from the hands of the bastard son of John. So ended the battle of Sandwich, the first of the series of great sea-fights between English and French, which six centuries later was to terminate in the culminating triumph of Trafalgar.

Neither during the reigns of Edward I. nor his unfortunate successor was the history of this country influenced by naval events; but one occurrence of the former reign is worthy of mention. Repeated attacks and reprisals on the part of Norman and Cinque Port ships—and finally, in the reign of Edward I., when the Normans, after an inglorious victory over peaceful ships, when the corpses of the captured English were hung at the yard-arms of the Norman vessels side by side with the carcasses of hogs—had roused English indignation to the highest pitch. Although there was no war between the two nations, it was agreed by both that the long-standing quarrel should be finally brought to a conclusion by a decisive action in mid-channel. The vendetta, in fact, was to be ended. In a storm of wind, hail, and sleet—weather conditions probably more suitable to the hardy English fishermen than to their foes—the two fleets met on a spot previously arranged, and marked by the anchoring thereon of a large and empty ship—an ideal spot for a war-correspondent, if such had existed in those days, to follow the events of the battle. The English ships, with which were some Irish and Dutch, numbered sixty, under Sir Robert Tiptoft; the Normans, who had the aid of some

French, Flemish, and Genoese, were in number two hundred. However, better sea-boats and better seamanship proved too much for superiority in numbers, and, after a long and bloody encounter, the enemy, hopelessly disorganised and shattered, fled for the Norman ports, leaving the best of their ships as prizes to the victorious English.

The reign of Edward III., however, differs from that of his predecessors, in that during it two of the most momentous and brilliant victories in the early history of our Navy were gained. Edward's claim to the throne of France had been met by Philip of Valois with a determined and prompt assumption of the offensive. In 1338–39, Southampton was several times attacked, once being sacked and set on fire, the defenders being surprised whilst at mass; Plymouth was twice attacked in the space of a week, the ships in the harbour and many of the houses being put to the flames; and at different times Sandwich, Winchelsea, Hastings, and Rye shared a similar fate. At sea, after a most gallant resistance, the *Christopher* and *King Edward*, two of the finest ships in the English Navy, became as prizes valuable reinforcement to the ranks of the French fleet. In the early summer of 1340, Edward had news that a mighty French

fleet was assembled at Sluys, on the Flemish coast. To attack it was Edward's immediate resolution; and in person an English king, leading an English fleet, sallied forth to ensure the safety of the English coast. Sir Robert Morley, with fifty ships of the north, sailed to reconnoitre, whilst the Earl of Arundel brought together the ships from the westward and Lord Huntingdon those of the Cinque Ports. Edward, flying his royal standard in the *Thomas*, headed his fleet for Blankenberg, on the Flemish coast, where Morley's squadron rejoined; and, on the 23rd of June, the French fleet were found anchored in the shallow estuary that runs inland to Sluys. There were in all some two hundred craft, some of extraordinary size, and including a contingent of Genoese galleys, under the command of Bocanegra, a gallant old veteran who had won fame in the Mediterranean. This old sea-dog did what lay in his power to urge the French admirals, Quieret and Bechuchet, to put to sea and give battle in the open sea; but the advice of Bocanegra was disregarded, and the French anchored their fleet in four divisions, bow on to the mouth of the river, the ships in each division being chained together. The French formation was, in fact, on the lines of that adopted

by Brueys in Aboukir Bay nearly five centuries later, and the result was a superb victory for the English, after a sanguinary engagement that lasted "for all that day and the night after," as stated by King Edward III. in a letter to his son. An account by Froissart describes the battle as "felonious and most horrible." This it certainly was for the French, for their losses amounted to about thirty thousand men, whereas those of the English were comparatively small. It is pleasing to be able to relate that Bocanegra succeeded in escaping with his Genoese galleys, as also, with a handful of ships, did a certain John Crabbe, a Scots ally of the French. Despite this, however, the victory of Sluys was so great that it left us in assured and undisputed command of the sea; and for the further prosecution of the war, the Channel was, to all intents and purposes, King Edward's ferry.

After Sluys, Edward assumed the great Alfred's proud title of "king of the seas," and that the assumption was no empty farce was well proved ten years later at the battle of "L'Espagnols sur Mer." A new sea power had dawned on our horizon, and it was one with which, in the fulness of time, we were to have a long and bitter fight for our very existence. In 1349, despite the fact that

the truce we then were keeping included Spain as well as France, a Spanish fleet, on its passage from Flemish ports, had seized and pillaged our Bordeaux wine ships and massacred the crews. This little incident was not forgotten; and in the following year, 1350, when the Dons, under De la Certa, again came up channel, the king determined to give them a lesson that was not likely to be forgotten. Accompanied by the "Black Prince," his third son, John of Gaunt, then but a lad of ten, and the flower of the English nobility and knighthood, he set sail in search of the Spanish fleet, which was sighted on August 29th. "I see a Spanish ship!" hailed the deck, from the watch in the top of the *Thomas*, the ship in which the king led the fleet. "I see one, two, three, four ships, I see so many, as may God help me, I cannot count them." So the historian; but, as a matter of fact, the Spaniards were but forty in all, and numerically inferior to the English; but this numerical inferiority was far more than counterbalanced by the superior size and larger crews of the Spanish vessels and by their possession of what Froissart characterises as "all kinds of artillery wonderful to think of." Ramming and boarding—there was but little finesse about the sea-fighting of those times—was,

as usual, the order of the day. The king's ship, after fouling a leading Spaniard and practically wrecking her, to the small detriment of the *Thomas*, then grappled another which the monarch leading his men boarded and captured as the ship that flew his flag sank at the side of the prize, which latter was promptly converted into the English flag-ship by the Royal Standard being hoisted at its masthead. The Prince of Wales's ship repeated the performance of the *Thomas*, and grappled a vessel which was to his "as a castle to a cottage." Unsuccessful in boarding, his vessel was sinking under her crew, when, luckily for the "Black Prince," the ship commanded by the Earl of Lancaster also grappled the Spaniard. This turned the fortune of the fight, and the crew of the Prince's ship were able to attain to safety and victory in that of the enemy, whilst their own vessel slowly settled to the bottom of the ocean. The *Salle du Roi*, commanded by a gallant Fleming, Sir Robert de Namur, and which carried the household of the king, was fast to a Spaniard, whose lofty sides had defied repeated attempts at boarding, and by which, as darkness fell, the English ship was being slowly carried away from the aid of her consorts. The situation was desperate,

when a hero named Hannekin, a body servant of Sir Robert, rapidly mounted the lofty side of the Spaniard unperceived by the foe, rushed forward, and with one sweep of his sword severed the main halliards, and brought the great yard with its huge spread of canvas crashing on the deck of the Spaniard. A few more doughty slashes and the stays that held the mast were severed. Pluck and alertness had its meet reward; and the plucky Hannekin returned scatheless to the deck of his own ship, to again stand by his comrades in the successful boarding attack which converted the confusion of the Spaniards into that panic that surprise will create in the bravest of troops. The *Salle du Roi* was no longer vanquished but victor, and the Spaniards—there was but little quarter in the sea fights of those days—were soon food for "the cod and the conger eel." So raged the great fight until by nightfall more than one half of the mighty Spanish ships were captured, and the remainder flying beaten and discomfited for the shelter of their own ports.

The sea power of England had thus in the middle of the fourteenth century reached its zenith, but from that date until it was to be recreated afresh by the Tudor Navy its decline was rapid. The

reign of Edward the Third did not close till nigh thirty years after the victory won over the Spaniards; but the usual neglect of the Navy, and the subsequent "rot," had set in long before then. In the very year that the Peace of Bretigny was signed (1360), and whilst English troops were ravaging the fairest provinces of France, Winchelsea was sacked and burned, and its inhabitants put to the sword; whilst the ships of the Cinque Ports, instead of being at sea to face the invader, were drawn up on the beach to keep them out of harm's way. Despite the fact that peace ruled from 1360 to 1369, the fleet remained inept and uncared for, with the result that when a squadron, under the Earl of Pembroke, sailed to relieve La Rochelle, then besieged by the French, it was so decisively beaten—though after a most gallant resistance—by the Spanish fleet on guard to seaward, that every ship was either taken or sunk, and the English commander became the prisoner of the Admiral of Castile. Inglorious as is the record, the battle is one of special interest, for Froissart distinctly makes mention of cannon having been used at it, probably for the first time at sea. With the accession of the eleven-year old grandson of Edward III., Richard II., affairs went from bad to worse. Over

and over again were the southern and eastern shores of our island home ravaged, its towns sacked and burned, and the inhabitants ruthlessly massacred. The Spaniards even raided the Thames, and burned Gravesend, thus shaming us in exactly the same fashion that the Dutch were to do three centuries later. Only the procrastination and delay of the enemy, and the luck of weather conditions, saved our isle from the foot of the invader, when, in 1385, Charles VI. of France had a fleet and expeditionary force at Sluys, with the avowed intention of invading England. Once only during the remainder of the Plantagenet régime was our sea power reasserted, namely, when, in 1387, the Earl of Arundel defeated a combined fleet of French, Flemish, and Spaniards, under the command of Sir John de Bucq, and captured eighty of the hundred sail of which it was composed. However, with the advent of the House of Lancaster, twelve years later, the fifteenth century dawned under somewhat brighter auspices. Though raiding attack was still active against our shores, it was retaliated for by cross-raiding, and many times we hit back as hard as we received. With the accession of Henry of Monmouth, fifth monarch of his name, a strong first line of defence again came for a time into being,

and was no small aid to Henry V. in his enterprise on the French throne. In 1416, the year after Agincourt, the Duke of Bedford completely defeated the French fleet off the mouth of the Seine; and in the following year the Earl of Huntingdon gained such a victory in the Channel, that, four days after, the English king was enabled to cross the Channel unmolested, and embark on the campaign which was to terminate by his triumphal entry into Paris, December 1420. During the reign of Henry VI. the decline again set in; and during the long and weary years in which the country was made desolate by all the horrors of civil war, what sea power England possessed was divided against itself. In truth, had Edward IV. and Richard III. utilised the period of triumph of the White Rose, to consolidate and augment the sea power of their kingdom, the course of history might have been altered, the landing of Henry of Monmouth at Milford Haven might have been prevented, Bosworth never been fought, nor the House of Tudor established on the British throne.

CHAPTER II

THE TUDOR NAVY

THE one hundred and twenty years that the story of the Tudor Navy covers is, perhaps, the most fascinating period in the whole history of the Royal Navy. It is the most interesting, for during it the growth of the fleet from an embryo navy to the perfect organism with which our forefathers won the command of the sea had its commencement and earlier development. It is the most romantic, for its story is in large measure the life story of those adventurers who, if half freebooters, were peerless seamen, and of a type that this country alone has produced. Let it be remembered that those whom Seeley calls the "hero buccaneers" were following a calling that was at the time eminently respectable, despite the fact that under the moral code of to-day their doings would come under the head of piracy. Social ethics, then, no more condemned them than do we to-day ostracise the raiders who, led by the

present prime-minister of the Cape Colony, failed to "rush" Johannesburg at the close of the nineteenth century. It is the most momentous, for it saw the one serious attempt at invasion of these islands that has occurred since the days of William the Conqueror. But before dealing with the naval incidents of the period it will be best to first describe the condition of the fleet at the commencement of and its growth throughout those years that commenced with the accession of Henry VII., and ended with the death of Queen Elizabeth.

To commence with the ships themselves, the "cog" of the early Plantagenet period had, as far back as the time of Edward IV., developed into a two-masted ship running to a size of a thousand tons; the fore and aft castles had become permanent structures built into the hull of the ship; and cannon had become a recognised part of a ship's armament. "King's ships," of which Edward IV., in one of his letters that have come down to us, enumerates six, the *Grace de Dieu*, *Henry*, *Anthony*, *Portingale*, *Spagnard*, and *Henry Aske*, had largely increased in number during the period under review. Reliance for naval defence was, however, still largely placed on ships furnished from the mercantile marine and privately owned. In 1517 the "king's ships" of

Henry VIII. numbered 21. In 1548, the second year of Edward VI., the list of "king's ships" totalled 53, but a large number of these were "pinnaces" and "row barges" of very small displacement. The total tonnage of the fleet then amounted to 11,628, and it was manned by 7731 soldiers and mariners. In 1578, Elizabeth's fleet totalled 24 ships, of 10,506 tons, carrying 6570 men, viz., 3760 seamen, 630 gunners, and 1900 soldiers. Though numerically inferior, it was a considerably more powerful force than that of thirty years previous, for it comprised 10 ships of 600 to 1000 tons burthen, with crews of 290 to 780 men; 7 ships of 240 to 400 tons, with crews of 160 to 250 men; and 7 ships from 50 to 160 tons, with crews ranging from 50 to 120 men. At the queen's death her fleet had risen to 42 ships, of 17,055 total tons burthen, and carrying 5534 mariners, 804 gunners, and 2008 soldiers, a total of 8346. It will thus be seen that during a quarter of a century the fleet had nearly doubled in numerical strength and total burthen. Moreover, it is interesting to note that whilst the number of soldiers shipped had remained almost stationary, the number of "mariners" had increased by nigh 50 per cent. and the number of "gunners" by over 25 per cent. In

other words, the Navy was approximating more and more to a sea force in which the seaman was also the fighting man. The *Great Harry*, built by Henry VII. in 1488, at a cost of £14,000, may be regarded as the first ship of the Royal Navy, for, unlike previous "king's ships," which in no way differed from ordinary merchantmen of their period, she was undoubtedly built primarily for war, though she probably engaged in commerce during peace time. This ship is stated by Derrick to have been burnt by accident at Woolwich in 1553; but according to Yonge she was, on the accession of Henry VIII., rechristened *Regent*, and perished in a memorable battle in 1812, which will be later alluded to. To replace the *Regent*, Henry VIII. built his great ship, the *Henry Grace de Dieu*. A great novelty in this ship was that she had port-holes, thus giving extra battery decks. This was a design introduced into the French ships fifteen years before by Descharges, a Brest shipwright. Henry's great ship was a two-decker, of large tonnage —one list says 1500—carrying 26 heavy guns, 14 on the lower and 12 on the main deck. Of light pieces there were 46—18 on the poop and quarter-deck, the same number on the forecastle, and 10 giving fire direct astern. She had 4 masts and a

bowsprit, and was square-rigged on the "foer" and "mayne," and lateen-rigged on the "mayne mizzen" and "bonaventure." She may be taken as a typical "great ship" of the sixteenth century; for the improvements that took place during the Elizabethan era consisted not so much in enlarging tonnage, but in building on longer keels and with finer lines, in the lowering of the great top-heavy superstructures, and, finally, in the sheathing of the keels with lead (an idea taken from the Spaniards), so as to decrease fouling.

Ordnance, and that of fairly large calibre, was now universally carried. The heavy pieces comprised cannon, demi-cannon, and cannon-petro, mounted on the lower deck, and culverins and demi-culverins mounted on the main deck. On the superstructure were carried the medium pieces, sakers, minions, falcons, falconets, and rabinets. Smaller pieces, known as "port-piece halls," "port-piece chambers," "fowler halls," "fowler chambers," and "curtalls," were also carried. Many of these latter discharged a number of projectiles—the prototype, in fact, of the modern "grape" and "canister"—and were mounted pointing inboard from the poop and forecastle, so as to be utilisable against any boarders who had made good their entrance. The

calibre and character of the main ordnance is shown in the following table taken from Derrick:—

TABLE OF SIXTEENTH-CENTURY ORDNANCE.

Sorts of Ordnance.	Bore.	Weight of Shot.
	inches.	lbs.
Cannon	8	60
Demi-cannon . . .	6¾	33½
Cannon petro . . .	6	24½
Culverin	5½	17½
Demi-culverin . . .	4	9½
Saker	3½	5½
Minion	3½	4
Falcon	2½	2
Falconet	2	1½
Rabinet	1	½

In fact, during the period so far did the science of artillery advance that we are told "sea fights in these days come seldom to boarding or to the great execution of bows and arrows, small shot, and the sword, but are chiefly performed by the great artillery breaking down masts and yards, tearing, raking, and bilging the ships." Some of the guns were brass pieces; indeed, according to Derrick, all the ordnance in some ships was of that material,

but in the main the guns were constructed of iron. The fact that the smaller pieces of artillery were "breech-loading" is but another proof of the old adage, that there is nothing new under the sun. As typical of the distribution of armament in heavy, medium, and light ships, we will take the *Triumph*, 1100 tons; the *Dreadnought*, 400 tons; and the *Tiger*, 200 tons; all ships which fought against the Spanish Armada. The *Triumph* carried as main armament 4 cannon, 3 demi-cannon, 17 culverins, and 8 demi-culverins; her secondary armament comprised 6 sakers, 1 port-piece hall, 4 port-piece chambers, 5 fowler halls, and 20 fowler chambers, a total of 68 pieces of ordnance. The 41 pieces carried in the *Dreadnought* comprised 2 cannon, 4 culverins, 11 demi-culverins, 10 sakers, 2 falcons, 4 fowler halls, and 8 fowler chambers. On board the *Tiger* were carried 6 demi-culverins, 14 sakers, and 2 falcons, in all 22 pieces. Besides ordnance, other material had been considerably improved. The striking of the topmast had been devised, and studding-sails, top-gallant sails, sprit-sails, and top-sails had come into use. The chain pump and the weighing of anchor by capstan had also been introduced.

If we turn to *personnel* we find that the develop-

ment, though present, was slower and less marked than in the material of the fleet. For over a century, the Cinque Ports were the mainstay of the sea power of England, but nevertheless every ship and every seaman in the country was liable to be imprest for the king's service; and it was but natural that, as the number of "king's ships" increased and new and important ports came into being, the "Royal Navy of the Cinque Ports," as it was sometimes termed, should find its importance lessened. On the east coast, London and Yarmouth; on the south coast, Portsmouth, Southampton, and Poole; in the west country, Dartmouth, Plymouth, Looe, Fowey, and Bristol had all become prominent as the breeding places—if the term may be used—of seamen. Poole and Dartmouth were especially memorable for their privateers. Chaucer's typical sailor who, if his morals left something to be desired, according to the poet "certeinly was a good felawe," was a Dartmouth man. Of the Poole men the old distich ran:—

> "If Poole was a fish-pool, and the men of Poole fish,
> There'd be a pool for the devil, and fish for his dish."

It will be evident, therefore, that as mercantile enterprise increased and trade developed, a consider-

able number of real deep-sea sailor-men, as distinct from those employed in coasting craft and in the fisheries, became available for the king's service. A list of Queen Elizabeth's time gives 11,500 seamen, 2300 fishermen, and 500 wherrymen, as liable for service to, if required, augment the fleet. As further demonstrating the fact that the seaman, as opposed to the soldier, was now fast assuming his proper position, the following figures are instructive:—

Types of Ship.	Tons.	Mariners.	Soldiers.	Gunners.	Total.
Henry G. de Dieu (1515) . .	1000[1]	301	349	50	700
Triumph (1578) .	1000	450	200	50	700
Triumph (1603) .	1000	340	120	40	500
Great Bark (1549)	500	138	138	26	300
Bonaventure (1578)	600	160	110	30	300
Bonaventure (1603)	600	150	70	30	250
Foresight (1578) .	300	120	60	20	200
Foresight (1603) .	300	114	30	16	160

[1] Most probably her real burthen.

From the above figures two facts stand out clear. The one that as we were able to draw on the deep-sea sailor, half privateer, half pirate, and wholly

seaman, we got a type excellent as mariners, and, on their own element, as good fighters as the land-trained soldier. The second fact is that, this type having become evolved, we were able to get increased efficiency on the same tonnage with smaller crews. That the breed, of whom the "blue-jacket" of to-day is the lineal descendant, came into being, we owe to our buccaneer forefathers, the men of whom Newbolt sings :—

> "Drake's luck to all that sail with Drake,
> For promised lands of gold!
> Brave lads, whatever storms may break,
> We've weathered worse of old!
> To-night the loving cup we'll drain,
> To-morrow for the Spanish main!"

Even more important than that the seaman was assuming his proper place in the organisation of the Royal Navy, was the fact that the importance of the proper administration of the "king's ships" was becoming duly recognised. The necessity for a properly trained and permanent nucleus of officers and subordinate officers was becoming more and more realised during the period with which we are dealing. As early, indeed, as the reign of Henry V., what was in reality the commencement of a permanent corps of naval officers had

begun. The battle in 1417, by which the victory of the Earl of Huntingdon cleared the way for the king's landing in France, has already been alluded to. Twelve days after his majesty had landed in France he issued an order granting an annuity to each of the masters of his "ships, carrakes, barges, and balingers." The names of these—"Fathers of the Royal Navy," as he well styles them—are given by Commander Robinson, R.N., in that most admirable and accurate mine of Naval lore, *The British Fleet.* They are, with the ships to which they belonged, as follows:—

John William (*Jesus*), Stephen Thomas (*Trinity Royal*), Jordan Brownyng (*Holy Ghost*), John Gerard (*Peter*), William Payne (*Paul*), John Thornyng (*Andrew*), —— Pendrell (*Christopher*), William Richeman (*Marie*), William Hethe (*Marie II.*), John Mersh (*George*), William Robynson (*Nicholas*), John Kyngeston (*Katherine*), Richard Walsh (*Marie III.*), Thomas Martyn (*Forward*), William Cheke (*Marie IV.*), William Yalton (*Christopher II.*), John Piers (*Petite Trinity*), Rauf Hoskard (*Anne*), Robert Shad (*Nicholas II.*), Edward Hooper (*George II.*), Stephen Welles (*Cracker*), Andrew Godfrey (*Gabriel*), John Bull (*Little John*), Janyn Cossard

(*James*), —— Rowe (*Swan*), Janyn Dene (*Katherine II.*).

"Admirals" and "captains," as well as "masters," had become recognised official ranks in the fifteenth century; and of subordinate rank there were the "boatswain" and his mates, the "quarter-masters," and the "gunner" and his mates. The latter rating owed its origin to the fact that as the use of ordnance became more and more general, men properly trained and skilled in its handling became more and more an essential part of a ship's complement. In the last quarter of the sixteenth century we first hear of the lieutenant, a rank which came into being not only with the idea of providing a combatant officer as a substitute for the captain when necessary, but also to provide a body of trained men from whom captains might be drawn. Before the end of the century the ranks and ratings had become fairly established, and, with their pay, were as follows:—The lord-admiral, vice-admiral, rear-admiral, and captain received respectively, per diem, £3, 6s. 8d., £2, 15s., and 2s. 6d. The remainder were paid per mensem, viz., lieutenant, £3; preacher, £2 to £3; secretary, £2; corporal, £1, 7s. 6d.; master, £1 to £3, 2s. 6d.; master's mate, 17s. 6d. to £1, 10s.;

quarter-master, 17s. 6d. to £1, 5s.; pilot, £7 to £7, 10s.; boatswain, 13s. 9d. to £1, 10s.; master carpenter, 17s. 6d. to £1, 5s.; master gunner, 13s. 4d. to 15s.; purser, 13s. 4d. to £1; surgeon, £1; cook, 13s. 9d. to 17s. 6d.; drummer, 15s.; yeoman of sheets, 17s. 6d.; yeoman of powder, 11s. 3d.; steward, 17s. 6d.; trumpeter, £1; piper, 15s.; armourer, 18s. 8d.; sailor, 10s.; gromet, 7s. 6d. The organisation was there, but discipline was bad, and the men a rough rabble, with, however, plenty of brute courage, especially with booty in view. This, however, is but little to be wondered at, when it is remembered that they were irregularly paid, atrociously fed, and for offences even of the slightest punished with a barbarity that can only be described as ferocious.

For the regulation of the *personnel* of the Navy on lines more closely akin to the present day we have to wait for the Stuart period, but the foundations of the administrative side of the Navy was commenced by Henry VIII. He it was who brought into being the "Navy Board," composed of the "Principal Officers of the Navy," viz., the Treasurer, Comptroller, Surveyor, and Clerk of the Acts, who, under the "Lord Admiral," were responsible for the administration of the "Navy

Royal." Thus came into existence an organised Admiralty, with its dockyard, ordnance, victualling, and other departments. Though prior to the time of Henry VIII. there had no doubt been specified places where "king's ships" were built, and laid up when not in use, and storeyards where their stores and supplies were collected and issued as required, yet to Henry VIII. may be truly ascribed the founding of the dockyards. He it was who first placed on a permanent footing the yard that existed at Portsmouth, and early in his reign created the yards at Woolwich and Deptford. The two latter were used as shipbuilding yards until less than half a century ago, but are now appropriated, the former to the Naval Ordnance Department, the latter as a victualling and storeyard. Portsmouth is, of course, to-day the largest and most important of all the yards. Chatham, which ranks next to Portsmouth, was founded by Queen Elizabeth, and stood, according to Derrick, "where the gun wharf now is, where there was only one small dock; and it being also too confined a spot, it was removed about the year 1622 to its present situation." The beginnings of the vast industrial establishments now at the service of the fleet, and under Admiralty control, had therefore been

thoroughly started during the period under review. Finally, and by no means the least important part of his work in solidifying our sea power, Henry VIII. established what is now known as the "Trinity House." The exact date at which "The Guild of the Holy and Undividable Trinity and St Clement at Deptford Strond" was founded, is unknown; but it was a guild of "pilots, seamen, and mariners," to which no doubt all or the bulk of the "masters" and those permanently employed in the "king's ships" belonged. The first mention we have of it is in the fourth year of the reign, in a document addressed to "the Masters, Rulers, and Mariners of the King's Navy in the Thames." To this guild the king, in 1514, granted a charter of incorporation, at the suggestion of Sir Thomas Spert, an old sea-dog, who was then Comptroller of the Navy, and had been master of the *Mary Rose* and the *Henry Grace de Dieu.* To them—quoting again from Commander Robinson—the charter allotted powers "for making laws, ordinances, and statutes for the relief, augmentation, and increase of the shipping of the realm, as well as for the conservation and improvement of the science and art of mariners." In the time of Elizabeth, we find the corporation alluded to as

"a company of the chiefest and most expert governors of ships, charged with the conduction of the Queen's Majesty's Navy Royal, bound to foresee the good increase and maintenance of ships, and of all kinds of men, trained and brought up to watercraft, most meet for Her Majesty's Marine Service." From this slight sketch of the functions of the "brethren" of the Trinity House, as they originally existed, it will be seen that they exercised no small influence over the development both of the material and *personnel* of the Royal Navy in its beginnings during the Tudor period.

Of the actual naval events of the period, with its momentous incidents, the story may now be told. Henry VII. not only built the *Great Harry*, and thus became the founder of a "Royal" war navy, but also kept his Navy so ready and well equipped that no necessity for its use ever arose, thereby proving that he had thoroughly grasped the truth of the adage, *Si vis pacem, para bellum.* Moreover, it was at his expense and under his auspices that Sebastian Cabot started the Empire with its first colony, Newfoundland, and so was the pioneer of those ocean rovers who, if their story is not strictly that of the Royal Navy, exercised no small influence on its development as it grew to maturity. Under

the rule of Henry VIII. there were three naval actions which are worthy of chronicle. In the course of that cross-raiding, which would appear to have been the essence of the naval strategy of the period, the then "Lord Admiral," Sir Edward Howard, had commissioned a fleet for the ravaging of the Brittany coasts. A large French fleet lying in the harbour of Brest was the first object of his attack. The French admiral, Jean de Thenounel, flew his flag in the *Cordelier*, one of the masterpieces of Descharges, the inventor of portholes, and the finest ship in the French Navy. Early in the action the *Cordelier* encountered the *Regent*, the largest ship of the English, which flew the flag of Sir Thomas Knevet, second in command to Howard. In the sanguinary duel that ensued, one of the two vessels caught fire, the conflagration spread to its opponent, and the result was the annihilation of both ships with all on board. The French to this day relate, and probably with truth, that the captain of the *Cordelier*, seeing English aid coming to the *Regent*, and the capture of his own ship probable, purposely set her on fire to ensure the destruction of both. Be this so, or not, the fact remains that the name of her captain, Herve de Portsmoguez, metamorphosed into "Primauguet," has been for

centuries immortalised by a ship with that name appearing on the French Navy list. So appalled were the combatants by the disaster that had fallen equally on each belligerent that both fleets drew off and left the battle an undecided one. In the following year the Royal Navy suffered a serious disaster in the loss, not of a ship, but of its first "High Admiral," Sir Edward Howard. This resulted from an ill-judged attempt to capture by cutting out some French galleys, most advantageously placed in Conquet Bay and well defended by shore fortifications. Despite the advice of his officers, Sir Edward made the attempt, himself gallantly leading the rash enterprise. The galley in which the Admiral was, grappled that of the French commander, Pregent de Bidoux, and the Admiral himself led the boarders. Hardly were a small band of the English on board when the grappling parted, and the galley, crippled as she was by the heavy fire hailed on her from the shore defences, was unable to return to their aid. Scorning to accept the quarter that the confession of his rank and surrender would have ensured for him, Sir Edward died with his followers, his last act being to hurl into the sea the gold chain that was the badge of his exalted position, and to which was attached

a whistle, taken, report has it, from the body of a noted Scots corsair, Andrew Barton, that Sir Edward had killed with his own hand in his first naval action. The third action took place off Spithead, and is memorable, like in truth the other naval events of the reign of Henry VIII., for a great naval disaster. A French fleet, under Admiral D' Annebaut, consisting of some 150 "great ships," a strong contingent of "galleys," and a host of smaller craft, had anchored in St Helen's Roads, with the usual object of ravaging attack on the mainland. To resist there was a fleet, numerically vastly inferior to the French, lying at Portsmouth, under the command of Lord Lisle, in the *Henry Grace de Dieu.* The battle—or rather the operations that took place, for there was little or no fighting—resulted in D'Annebaut failing in his attempt to bring the British fleet to action, and abandoning his effort to raid the mainland, and are indeed only memorable for the fact that it was during them the *Marie Rose*, one of the finest ships then afloat, foundered in attempting to tack in a strong breeze with her ports open and her guns cast loose. Of the 600 mariners and soldiers that formed her complement only 35 were saved.

During the brief reign of Edward VI. there is

nothing of any real moment to be recorded in the history of the Royal Navy, and indeed almost the same may be said for Mary's reign. It was, however, in some measure due to the fleet that Count Egmont, the Spanish Commander-in-Chief, obtained his victory over the French at Gravelines, in 1558, for the battle was fought so close to the Flemish coast that the guns of the fleet were enabled to come into play. There is also an episode in Mary's reign which is worthy of remembrance, for it shows that by that period the fleet had acquired the right spirit and knowledge of its own superiority and importance. In July of 1554, Mary accepted Philip of Spain as her husband. Naturally the ships of the queen were utilised to meet and convoy the bridegroom to his nuptials. Equally naturally Philip had with him his escort of Spanish ships. When the two flotillas met, Lord Howard of Effingham, the leader of the English flotilla, was surprised to find that the haughty Spaniard had neglected to pay the *devoir* due to our flag, the lowering of topsails, whereupon he promptly proceeded to assert our sea supremacy by a shotted broadside in lieu of the exchange of compliments with which he was charged to welcome the royal bridegroom. The incident is a trifling one, but it

THE *HENRY GRACE DE DIEU*

1515

is significant inasmuch as it shows that Englishmen were beginning to feel their feet, and rising to the knowledge of the fact that on their sea supremacy depended their existence as a nation and their sole claim to rank as a world power. It was but a demonstration of the underlying current that was governing the whole development of our national life at the period. Despite neglect, the seed sown in the early Tudor period was fructifying to reach its early growth under Elizabeth. The race had gripped the fact that sea power was the synonym for their existence as a nation; the events of the Elizabethan period drove the lesson home. On the accession of Elizabeth, the national hatred of Spain, engendered as much by religious rancour as by a desire to share in the trade and treasure of the newly-discovered continent, which, under the title of the Spanish Main, the Don had practically closed to the rest of the maritime powers of Europe, was not only un-repressed but encouraged. In fact, our maritime enterprise was, for the next forty years, to be centred on two objects. We were in some respects working blindly and unknowingly, but underlying all the mercantile and trading enterprise there was a striving to achieve sea supremacy. To wrest from the greatest sea power

in the world the dominance which cut us off from all commercial outlet, and more especially from trade with what were then the richest marts in the world. Behind that, again, was another all-powerful influence, viz., that of religion. In attacking Spain we were hitting hardest at that Papal tyranny which the nation loathed and feared, and of which Spain was the embodiment. It would, indeed, be almost impossible to overrate the influence which the freebooters and discoverers of the Elizabethan period exercised, not only over our naval development, but over the current in which our national history was to flow. Nevertheless much, and that perhaps the most interesting part, of their story is not the actual story of the Royal Navy. When Hawkins and Drake sailed on the enterprise which was to terminate in the Spanish treachery of San Juan de Ulloa, the adventure, though the *Jesus* and *Minion* of the flotilla were both "queen's ships," lent to the company of adventurers, was only a private one. Again, Drake was but a private adventurer, when, with his fleet of five ships, but 275 tons in total burthen, and carrying but 164 seamen, he embarked on that voyage in which he was to circumnavigate the globe, and, apart from profit, reap such honour and glory that his name will be for all time a

household word to his adoring countrymen. Similarly the romantic story of heroic navigation and maritime discovery is strictly no part of the actual story of the Royal Navy. Frobisher, Davis, Gilbert, and the rest were but private adventurers, although none the less were they the progenitors of that race of seamen who in later years were to breed within the Royal Navy some of the greatest explorers and navigators in the world's history. They were, in fact, the prototypes of such types of naval officer as Anson, Byron, Cook, Franklin, and, to come down to our own days, Nares and Scott.

It is very probable that Drake served as a master of one of the "queen's ships" at one time, though of this there is no absolute proof. Even so his appointment was but of a temporary character, and it is not until 1585 that we find him commissioned by Elizabeth to the command of a fleet with letters of marque. (He was not, however, the only one of those great merchant seamen — whose only fault, according to Julian Corbett, was an aptitude for a "too violent vindication of the legitimate aspirations of English commerce"—who had taken to the service of the Crown; for Hawkins had, since 1573, been Treasurer and Comptroller of the Navy.) The fleet, of which Drake, in 1585, became admiral, was

a fine one, for it comprised two "great" ships and eighteen smaller ones, with their complement of store ships and pinnaces. Drake flew his flag in the *Bonaventure*, a 600-ton ship of the Royal Navy, with Fenner, an old comrade, as his flag captain. Frobisher, as the nominee of the London merchants and commodore of their contingent, was, according to the custom of the time, the vice-admiral, and flew his flag in the *Primrose*, a 200-ton ship. The rear-admiral, who flew his flag in the "galleon" *Leicester*, of 400 tons burthen, and the second largest ship in the squadron, was Sir Francis Knollys, the son of the Treasurer of the Household, a cousin of the queen, and brother-in-law to Leicester. This armada, which was manned by 2300 mariners and soldiers, was assembled by August, but it was a month and more before it could get to sea. Even then, however, his preparations were but half completed. But this little matter was soon rectified, for Drake's first proceeding was to seize *Vigo*, where, in calm disdain of the whole naval power of Spain, he watered and victualled before pushing on to the Spanish Main. Here the two rich towns of San Domingo and Cartagena, both walled and fortified cities with large garrisons, were held to heavy ransom. The

former, a city of whom Raleigh's Virginian colonists had sent home the story of its almost fabulous wealth, was the capital of Hispaniola, now known as Hayti, or San Domingo. The latter, now the chief commercial port of the Republic of Colombia, was then the capital of the Spanish Main, and, though a younger city than San Domingo, even more wealthy. As throwing an interesting side-light on the magnitude of Drake's achievement, it is interesting to note that Vernon, another renowned victor in the Spanish Main, was unable to reduce Cartagena, a little more than a century and a half after Drake's exploit. Luck, however, was not altogether with the expedition. Sickness in the fleet prevented his sacking Panama, and, by twelve hours' sail only, the Plate fleet succeeded in evading his victorious squadron. By July of 1586 he was home again, and his dispatch to Burghley is eminently characteristic of the modesty that, as a rule, has marked all our greatest sailors from Drake to Nelson. In reporting a series of successes that filled England with delight, Spain with rage and dismay, and Europe with an amazed amusement, all the comment he has to make is, "My very good Lord, there is now a very great gap opened very little to the liking of the King of Spain. God

work it all to his glory." Even these achievements, however, paled before those of the following year, when, by "singeing of the King of Spain's beard," Philip's contemplated invasion was to be deferred by a year. This time four of the largest battleships in the service, and two pinnaces, were the Navy's contribution to Drake's fleet. Drake himself flew his flag in his old *Bonaventure*; while Borough, his vice-admiral, was housed in an almost sister ship, the *Golden Lion*. Of the other two "queen's great ships," Fenner commanded the *Dreadnought*; and Henry Bellingham, who the following year was to have a squadron, the *Rainbow*, the very latest experiment in naval architecture, and only a few months borne on the navy list. The Levant Company provided a squadron of seven fine ships, headed by the *Merchant Royal*, in which their commodore, Captain Flick, flew a rear-admiral's flag as third-in-command of the fleet. There were also some small ships owned by Drake personally and the lord admiral. In all, the fleet comprised sixteen ships (100 to 550 tons) and seven pinnaces (30 to 80 tons), and this force was later raised to twenty-five sail by two men-of-war from Lyme, which the admiral met on the first day at sea, and by virtue of his commission attached to his flag. Off Lisbon,

Drake heard from some homeward bound Flemish ships that a vast accumulation of stores and shipping was collected at Cadiz preparatory to sailing for Lisbon. Cadiz, therefore, became his objective, despite the fact that the port was heavily fortified and garrisoned, and that there lay there ten or twelve galleys, then the most formidable warship afloat, and especially so in landlocked waters such as the Cadiz anchorage in which the operations would have to be conducted. In fact, he was accepting much the same menace that an admiral of to-day would be facing in attacking a fleet, lying under the protection of well-gunned land forts, and aided by a numerous torpedo flotilla. Borough, his vice-admiral, and a man whose reputation stood second only to that of Hawkins and Drake himself, was strongly opposed to the enterprise. But Drake, in whose character fear of responsibility was as absent as in that of Nelson, held to his ideas. So perfectly were his plans laid that in a few hours he had entered Cadiz roads, destroyed some twelve thousand tons of shipping (many of the ships being amongst the largest and finest then afloat), captured an enormous amount of plunder, fully victualled his fleet with wine, oil, biscuits, and dried fruit, and had with him six large

prize ships fully laden with provisions. The most interesting feature of the actual fighting was the fact that it was now, for the first time, clearly demonstrated, that well-handled ships with guns, crews that could shoot, were more than a match for galleys, whether on a wind, or in a calm, for both conditions prevailed in the two days' fighting at Cadiz. On the Portuguese coast raiding was next effected, and plunder secured; though to Drake's disappointment he was unable to induce Santa Cruz, the Spanish admiral at Lisbon, to emerge from the Tagus and fight him at sea. Finally, to put the crowning touch on his success, he captured on his way home the famous carrack, *San Filippe*, the richest prize ever taken into an English port, for its cargo was of a value of over a million sterling. This great ship was the largest merchant vessel afloat, and the King of Spain's own private venture to the East Indies. Moreover, apart from the booty it brought to its captors, it had a value the worth of which was incalculable. On board were found papers fully disclosing not alone all the richness of the East India trade, but also the methods by which it could be secured and carried on. It was this find that so fired the imagination of the merchant princes of the city of

London, that they never rested easy, till twelve years later, 22nd September 1599, saw the birth of the great East India Company. It is, therefore, no exaggeration to say that the capture of the *San Filippe* laid the foundation of our Indian Empire.

The blows that had been dealt to Spain were heavy; but never for a moment did Philip abandon his contemplated invasion of the kingdom of the hated heretic, and, in addition, Elizabeth's vacillation and parsimony left him free to pursue his preparations unmolested, and to replace at his leisure the ships and stores of which he had been despoiled. Not only did the queen refuse to allow Drake to sail on another foray, but she would not even take the elementary precaution of mobilising a fleet. It was not till the close of 1587 that steps were taken to put the Navy on a war footing. The dispositions then made were as follows:—Lord Howard of Effingham was commissioned as lord high admiral to command the main fleet, with Hawkins and Frobisher as his flag officers. Drake was to be lieutenant to the lord high admiral, with a fleet of thirty sail, as an independent command, with Fenner as his vice, and Crosse as his rear, admiral. A third fleet was organised, with Lord Henry Seymour as admiral, and Palmer and

Wynter as second and third in command. Roughly, the broad strategy was thus: Howard, with the main fleet, was to guard the Channel. Drake, with his independent command, was to be left free to inflict a counterblow anywhere that appeared

With Drake.	With Howard.	With Seymour.
Revenge (500) (Drake's flagship).	Ark Royal (800) (Howard's flagship).	Rainbow (500) (Seymour's flagship).
Nonpareil (500) (Fenner's flagship).	Victory (800) (Hawkins's flagship).	Antelope (400) (Palmer's flagship).
Hope (600) (Crosse's flagship).	Triumph (1100) (Frobisher's flagship).	Vanguard (500) (Wynter's flagship).
Swiftsure (400).	White Bear (1000).	Bull (200).
Aid (250).	Elizabeth Jonas (900).	Tiger (200).
	Bonaventure (600).	Tramontana (150).
	Mary Rose (600).	Scout (120).
	Golden Lion (500).	Achates (100).
	Dreadnought (400).	George (100).
	Swallow (360).	"Galley" Bonavolia (250).
	Foresight (300).	7 ships under 100 tons.
	7 ships under 100 tons.	
(5 ships.)	(18 ships.)	(17 ships.)

opportune; and, indeed, volunteers flocked to his flag under the impression that the orders were to be again, "Westward Ho!" Seymour was to watch the narrow seas, and to keep an eye on Parma, who, with 30,000 picked troops, was in the Netherlands awaiting the arrival of the Armada that was to give a free sea to his expeditionary force. The disposition of the forty ships, of which the Royal Navy then consisted, was as tabulated above.

But this small, if fine, force was only the backbone of a much larger fleet. Along the whole coast of the kingdom, the ports, and in many cases by the generosity of private individuals, were fitting out and furnishing naval force of various kinds, and this with a vigour and munificence that demonstrated the extent to which the nation was roused. London, for example, called on for fifteen ships, sent double the number. Many of these ships were, it must be remembered, fully equal to men-of-war of the same tonnage. Indeed, in the opinion of Mr Corbett, probably the greatest authority on the period, the *Merchant Royal* and the "galleon" *Leicester*, each of 400 tons, were "probably superior as men-of-war to any Spanish great ship of equal tonnage." The total force put afloat has been often put at nigh two hundred sail; but, eliminating the

smaller pinnaces—which had no separate crews, were towed by the vessels to which they were attached, were in fact not real units—and ships unready, or which failed to join in time for the encounter, we may put the whole British strength at under one hundred and fifty craft of all kind. As against this, the total strength in round numbers of the Armada was one hundred and twenty vessels, registering about 58,000 tons, carrying nearly 2500 guns of all calibres, and with a *personnel* that numbered over 19,000 soldiers and 8000 seamen. But if the numerical superiority of the English aggregation was in excess of that of the Spaniards, there was presumably no question as to the fighting superiority of the Armada. Ship for ship the enemy's fleet looked to be double the size of ours, for the tonnage of the British fleet was but half that of the Armada. There was even a greater numerical disparity between the *personnel* of the two fleets, the superiority again lying with Spain. Finally, the Spanish ships were supposed to carry much heavier and much more numerous ordnance. This fighting superiority was, however, to a great extent more apparent than real. The Spanish method of measuring tonnage (I am throughout quoting Corbett) gave results from

twenty-five per cent. to forty-five per cent. higher than the system then in vogue in England. The great superiority in men was counterbalanced by the fact that, throughout the Spanish fleet, the proportion of seamen to soldiers was, in the bulk of the ships, ridiculously inadequate. Most of them were in fact but transports, though the Spanish infantry they carried was at the period reckoned the finest in the world. Much of the Spanish ordnance existed only on paper; for many of the ships were but half armed, or their armament completed with pieces either too light to be effective except at very short range, or so antiquated as to be nigh useless. Finally, there was on our side perfect seamanship and gunnery, on the Spanish side a woful lack of both.

The Armada, *El Felice*, or *Invincible*, as it was styled, was under the command of the Duke of Medina Sidonia; he, on the very eve of the great enterprise, having taken the place of Santa Cruz, "whom overwork and unjust attacks had sent to his grave." With him were Martinez de Recalde, as vice-admiral, Pedro de Valdez, Miguel de Oquendo, Hugo de Moncada, and many other sea captains of renown. On the 30th May, 1588, the great fleet left Lisbon, but they were badly handi-

capped by adverse weather conditions and poor seamanship. Moreover, before they were even clear of the Spanish coast, much of the victualling arrangements were found to be faulty, and many of the ships short of water. Sidonia, therefore, determined to put into Corunna for overhaul and refit, and it was 12th July before the Armada was again under way. Meanwhile Howard's main fleet had joined up with that of Drake on 23rd May, bringing the united squadrons up to some hundred sail. Drake was now the vice-admiral to Lord Howard, with John Hawkins third in command; but none the less did the fleet and the country know that it was Drake who was the guiding spirit of the whole, and that, though his position was subordinate, yet henceforth it would be in his hands that the conduct of affairs would lie to a large extent. And so on that memorable night, when the beacon lights flashed from the Eddyston to Skiddaw, and from Milford Haven to Lynn, there was, both afloat and ashore, calm and assured confidence in the outcome of the great struggle.

As flagships, Howard had the *Ark Royal*, Drake the *Revenge*, Hawkins the *Victory*. July 19th was the date of the historic scene on the Hoe,

THE SPANISH ARMADA IN THE BAY OF BISCAY

1588

when the fateful tidings brought by Fleming—curiously enough himself the master of a *Golden Hind*—told the country that the hour of the Armada's approach had at length come. That night, in the teeth of the wind that for weeks had made it impossible to strike a blow home at the Armada in their rendezvous at Corunna, the fleet was warped out of Plymouth Sound, Rame Head weathered; and the 20th found Howard creeping down close to the coast in typical dirty Channel weather, his object being to get to westward and to windward of the enemy. In the afternoon the Armada was sighted, but in decreased force. A large galleon had foundered, the galleys had been compelled to give up the expedition altogether, and sickness and desertion had reduced the number of seamen by a thousand and the troops by double that number. During that night Howard and his officers and men strained all the resources of seamanship to get to windward of the foe, and with success; for by daybreak on the 21st, a Sunday, the Armada was a little west of Looe, slowly advancing up Channel, while to seaward and windward the English ships were hanging on its rear. All day they followed harassing the wings of the crescent formation adopted by the Spaniards,

and, if doing no very great amount of damage, effecting what little they were able with complete immunity to themselves, and proving that the English vessels were incomparably better handled, and that their fire was superior both in weight of metal and rapidity. During the night, Drake, who was showing the guiding light to the fleet, turned to chase some strange sail to the westward. These he thought might be some of the Spanish ships trying to weather the English fleet, and he consequently put out his light and tacked towards them. In the upshot they turned out to be some harmless German merchantmen; but Howard and two or three of his ships mistook the light of a rearmost Spanish ship for that of the *Revenge*, while the other captains, at a loss what to do under the circumstances, either hove to, or shortened sail. When day broke, Drake found himself with naught near him but a huge Spanish galleon. This was *Nuestra Senora del Rosario*, the flagship of Don Pedro de Valdes, captain-general of the Andalusian squadron. She had been severely damaged in a collision with a colleague, but was repairing damages, and had heretofore beaten off all assailants. However, the mere announcement that the new foe was the *Revenge*, with Drake himself on

board, was enough to induce an unconditional surrender. Valdes, with forty of his officers, were taken on board the *Revenge*, and the prize with 55,000 ducats on board was sent into Dartmouth. Meanwhile, Howard had found himself with his few ships amongst the rearmost Spaniards, but he was luckily able to extricate himself without fighting, and rejoin the fleet, which was considerably in his rear. So light was the wind, and so scattered the fleet, that it was late in the afternoon before all were again united in the rear of the Spaniards. Drake had, as we have seen, secured a valuable prize, and Howard and Hawkins had also picked up another. This was the *San Salvador*, the flagship of the Guipuscoan squadron, under the command of Oquendo. She had been shattered by an explosion in her powder magazine, had been abandoned, and was towed as a prize into Weymouth. As Monday closed the winds fell, and the two fleets lay becalmed off Portland; and on the following day, the 23rd, there occurred the heaviest fighting that had as yet taken place. The weather conditions allowed of the galeasses, the great-oared ships of the enemy, to make a heavy attack on Frobisher in the *Triumph*; but a shift of wind in the nick of time enabled Howard to come up to his rescue.

The *San Martino*, Sidonia's flagship, suffered somewhat heavily, and the *Santa Anna*, Recalde's flagship, was so battered that the admiral had to shift his flag. On the whole, however, the result of a hard-fought action was but small. On the 24th there was little fighting, Howard's fleet was reinforced, and a renewed supply of powder obtained. On the following day the fleet was re-organised into four divisions, commanded respectively by Howard, Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, and the attack was again renewed on the Spaniards, who by this time were off the Isle of Wight. The result of this fighting, of which Hawkins wrote, "a hot fray, wherein some store of powder was spent, and, after all, little done," was to checkmate any attempt at the occupation of that island as a Spanish *point d'appui*, and Sidonia hastened westward to the French coast, coming to an anchorage off Calais on the 27th. In short, the result of the fighting up to the present had been thus. The Spaniards had been somewhat, if not very heavily, punished in the loss of ships and men, and damage to their fleet generally. Their morale was considerably lowered. Any ideas Sidonia had of securing a footing on English soil, either on the mainland or on the Isle of Wight, had been com-

pletely foiled. Finally, the Armada now knew with dismay that their enemy altogether outclassed them, both in seamanship and gunnery.

On the day after the action off the Isle of Wight, the two fleets lying becalmed some two miles distant, an historic episode was enacted on the poop of the *Ark Royal.* On what was practically the field of battle, and under the eyes of a defeated and humiliated enemy, Howard conferred the accolade on those who had, in his opinion, most distinguished themselves. The first to be knighted were his own kinsmen, Lord Thomas Howard and Lord Sheffield, who commanded respectively the *Golden Lion* and the *White Bear*; then Mr Roger Townshend, of whom the present holder of the Marquisate of Townshend is the direct descendant; and, finally, three seamen, Hawkins, Frobisher, and George Beeston. The latter was the captain of the *Dreadnought*, a veteran naval officer, who, as far back as 1562, had commanded the "Channel Guard." For Drake there was no honour that Howard had it in his power to bestow. He could, it is true, have created him a knight banneret, but the custom had already fallen into desuetude. On the following day, Saturday the 27th, Seymour and his squadron joined up with Howard; and on the Sunday, at a council

of war held on board Howard's flagship, the determination to send in fireships on the Spanish fleet, which had now almost reached its goal, Dunkirk, was arrived at. Eight ships were chosen for the purpose, and at a black midnight the flaming hulks came drifting down with wind and tide on the panic-stricken Spaniards. The effect, in truth, was only moral, for, as the grey dawn broke on the morning of the 30th, it was seen that not a single ship of the Spaniards had caught fire. But the threat had been sufficient. Cables had been cut, sail crowded on; and the great Armada, many of its ships damaged by collisions received in their frantic efforts to escape the dreaded fireships, was flying in a disorganised mass to the north-east. Sidonia, in the *San Martin*, made an attempt to rally his scattered fleet off Gravelines, and the finest of his ships boldly answered to his signal and manœuvred to form on the flagship. Howard himself weakly turned to capture a huge galleass disabled by collision; and, as Corbett puts it, "for the sake of capturing a ship already out of action, he risked the last chance of destroying the whole Armada." But Drake, superbly seconded by the rest of the fleet, bore down relentlessly on the giants that were attempting to make some kind of a fleet formation

THE DISPERSAL OF THE ARMADA IN CALAIS ROADS
BY FIRE SHIPS

1588

on the *San Martin.* For nine hours the battle raged with fury; but, though the Spaniards displayed a courage as bold and enduring as that of the English bulldogs, that at last had them fairly by the throat, they were, by nightfall, beaten. Outgunned and worsted by superior seamanship, all their efforts were now centred on trying to claw off the battered ships that survived the encounter from the deadly Netherland shoals on to which a north-west wind was driving them. Throughout the summer night the English fleet watched and waited, but with daybreak came a gleam of hope for the remnant of the Invincible Armada. A shift of wind to the southward enabled them to steer northward, and to the open sea, clear of the dreaded shoals. For two days Howard and Drake followed, until, when north of the Dogger bank, a furious gale swept from the westward, and the English, running for shelter, knew that the elements would soon complete the work of havoc. As a potential danger and menace to England, the Great Armada had ceased to exist. Some perished as far north as the Orkneys, the Faroe Isles, and even the coast of Norway. Those that attempted to find a harbour of refuge on the Irish coast were destroyed and their crews massacred. Of the Invincible Armada,

that represented all the might and strength of the greatest sea power in the world, but a bare fifty battered hulks, fleeing north and west about the coasts of Scotland and Ireland, survived to reach Corunna after months had elapsed; their crews worn out with exposure and exhaustion, and two of their ablest admirals, Recalde and Oquendo, lying dying.

But two more incidents in the story of the Tudor Navy need be referred to. In 1591 occurred the loss of the *Revenge*, Drake's ever memorable flagship. At the time of what is perhaps the most glorious of the many glorious stories in the annals of the British Navy, the *Revenge*, with Sir Richard Grenville as her captain, formed part of a force of six ships, which, under the command of Sir Thomas Howard, was cruising off the Azores on the look-out for the Spanish treasure fleet. While lying at Flores, news came that a Spanish force of fifty-three ships was approaching. Howard, with five of his ships, was able to escape; but the gallant Grenville, whose sick were lying ashore, delayed to embark them, and was overtaken by the Spanish fleet. In spite of the hopeless odds, and the fact that but a hundred of his crew were fit to man the guns, Grenville disdained to haul down his flag, and for

a day and night fought the battle that Tennyson describes so superbly in the noblest ballad ever written in the English language,

"And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes his ears
When he leaps from the water to the land.
And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons came;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-thunder and flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and her shame.
For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and so could fight us no more—
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world before?"

Only when Grenville lay dying, half of his hundred fighting men dead, her masts gone, her powder expended, did the *Revenge* yield, and then so shattered was her hull that she foundered the next day, with her Spanish crew on board. The second incident was in 1596, when Howard took a leaf out of Drake's book and made a descent on Cadiz, to foil another preparation for the invasion of England,

that Philip was believed to be meditating. The fleet comprised seventeen queen's ships, with a hundred and twenty merchant auxiliaries, and, in addition to the crews carried on board, an expeditionary force of seven thousand troops under Essex. Although the troops effected but little, the fleet burnt or captured the whole of the large accumulation of shipping in Cadiz, destroyed a vast mass of military stores, and secured an enormous booty. With the exception of some minor expeditions to the Azores, Puerto Rico, and the Portuguese coast, this closed the naval record of the Tudor period; and with the accession of James I., peace was at last made with Spain.

LAST FIGHT OF THE *REVENGE*

1591

CHAPTER III

THE NAVY OF THE COMMONWEALTH AND RESTORATION

THE naval history of the period of 110 years that elapsed between the accession of James I. and the death of Queen Anne may be conveniently divided into four periods. The first includes the three Dutch wars, 1651 to 1654, 1665 to 1667, and 1672 to 1674. The second, the war with Spain, 1655 to 1660, and the war with France, 1689 to 1697. The third is the period of the war of the Spanish Succession, 1702 to 1713. Though out of its chronological order, it will be most convenient to deal with the second period first.

In the winter of 1654, Blake, with a fleet of twenty large and five small vessels, was sent to the Mediterranean. Ostensibly, the purpose of the expedition was to demand satisfaction and restitution from the pirates of the African coast, but it was also a preparatory move for the hostilities with

Spain, which Cromwell had already determined upon. However, Tunis, whose rovers had recently seized a fleet of English trading ships, and made slaves of their crews, was made Blake's first objective. Blake's demand for the restitution of the ships and the release of the crews was met by the Bey with defiance, and Blake and his fleet were bidden to do their worst. The tactics the great admiral resorted to were those which he repeated at Santa Cruz just two years later. The large ships engaged the batteries, while to the smaller craft and the boats of the fleet was entrusted the task of destroying all the shipping in the harbour, and the whole enterprise was accomplished with such rapidity and success that the total English loss amounted to but twenty-five killed and forty-eight wounded. After the subjugation of Tunis, Tripoli and afterwards Algiers were both visited; but the object-lesson at Tunis had been sufficient, and the Beys of both places submitted at once to the English demands. At the same time as Blake had left for the Mediterranean, a combined naval and military force, with Penn as admiral, and Venables in command of the troops, had sailed for the West Indies, where, though an attempt to capture Hispaniola failed, Jamaica surrendered without firing

a shot, and England thus acquired the most valuable of all her West Indian possessions. The incident of these operations is one highly characteristic of the methods of the period, for the two nations were not at war; in fact, war was not declared by the Spaniards until the news of what had occurred in the West Indies had reached Spain, which was not till the February of the following year. Meanwhile, Blake, with his fleet slightly increased by a small reinforcement under Admiral Montagu, had commenced the blockade of Cadiz; but in September the major part of the fleet had gone to Lisbon to re-victual and water, leaving only Captain Stayner, with seven frigates, to watch the port. At this juncture the Plate fleet arrived. Stayner's small squadron of frigates was mistaken for merchantmen, and the Spaniards allowed them to close in on them unsuspected, until the English frigates proclaimed their identity by pouring in a heavy fire on the amazed crews of the Plate ships. Of the eight galleons in the Spanish fleet, one was sunk, two driven ashore, one burnt, two captured, and two alone escaped into Cadiz.

Throughout the winter a strict blockade of the Spanish ports was maintained; but in April 1657, Blake, hearing that a treasure-fleet of twenty-two

large vessels was *en route* for Spain, raised the blockade of Cadiz, and sailed for the Canaries with twenty-five ships. The Spanish fleet was found lying in the harbour of Santa Cruz, under the guns of the numerous and powerful land fortifications, and in a port they believed impregnable to attack from the sea. For Blake, like Drake, there was no such word as failure in his vocabulary, and he determined that he would make no attempt to bring out the treasure-ships, but destroy the whole fleet as it lay at its anchorage under the guns of the forts. The Tunis tactics were to be repeated: Blake and the battleships would engage the forts, while Stayner, with the smaller craft, would compass the destruction of the ships. The enterprise was superbly accomplished, and never did British gunnery prove more effective and destructive. In a four hours' fight the forts were so hotly engaged as not only to be prevented from hindering Stayner's mission of destruction, but were so silenced as to leave Blake free to aid the latter in the completion of his work. Two hours later every ship in the land-locked and fort-surrounded harbour was sunk or burnt, and the loss to Spain, both in blood, treasure, and morale, was enormous. Blake, moreover, had "Drake's luck," for the wind that

BLAKE'S ACTION AT STA. CRUZ

1657

had been fair to bear him into the harbour shifted right round at the moment when the operations were completed, and was of equal aid to him when the time to retreat came. Santa Cruz is a naval incident of special interest, because it shows that the freebooting and looting of the Tudor days was becoming a thing of the past. There lay the gold; but the object of the enterprise was not to seize it for the benefit of its captors, but to destroy it for the benefit of the commonwealth that they served. This makes the fight at Santa Cruz an epoch-marking incident in the story of the Royal Navy. Patriotism, not profit, was to be the keynote of the new Navy; glory, not gold, was to be its reward.

Santa Cruz was the great admiral's last exploit. Worn out with scurvy and dropsy, induced by arduous service and long confinement on board of ship, the great patriot and the great seaman died on the very day that the *St George*, his flagship, dropped her anchor in Plymouth Sound.

In the struggle with France, which commenced with the departure of James II. in 1689, and continued until the Peace of Ryswick in 1697, there were but three actions fought, only one of which was of really first magnitude. The war opened by

the French escorting James with a small force of adherents that remained loyal to his cause to Ireland. The escorting squadron comprised thirty-seven powerful ships, of which Chateau-Renard, the admiral, left nineteen at Kinsale, in case James might require their assistance, and returning to France with the remainder, he was met by Herbert with twelve vessels off Bantry Bay. The action that followed was but a skirmish—a distant interchange of fire for about an hour, and then the French fleet fell back into Bantry Bay, whence Herbert did not dare to follow them. William, however, thought it politic at this early period of his reign to make much of the occasion. Herbert was raised to the peerage as Earl of Torrington; two of his captains, Cloudesley Shovel and John Ashby, knighted; and money rewards given to the seamen of the fleet. Torrington's reputation as a sea-commander was, however, but very short-lived. In the spring of 1690, Torrington was afloat with fifty-six sail of the line, combined English and Dutch. The French fleet was entrusted to the Count de Tourville, one of the most distinguished and skilful naval officers of the day, and comprised eighty-four ships. The two fleets encountered off Beachy Head on June 30th. In the face of the over-

whelming superiority of the French, Torrington would gladly have retreated; but Queen Mary, who was directing affairs during the king's absence in Ireland, had issued peremptory orders to fight at all hazards. He therefore obeyed, but in the most half-hearted fashion. So slow were his movements that it looked, in fact, as if he wished to leave the brunt of the action to the twenty-two Dutch ships which formed the van portion of his command. The action was fought almost in a calm; and the majority of the English ships, amongst them Torrington's own flagship, never fired a single shot. The Dutch suffered severely, losing six ships, with two admirals; whilst we were forced to set on fire the *Anne*, 74, to prevent her falling into the hands of the enemy. In the upshot, Torrington and his command retreated into the Thames Estuary. Torrington was tried and acquitted, but he was never again actively employed. His place was taken by that great seaman, Edward Russell, who later became Earl of Orford, who had for his subordinates in flag command Killigrew, Delaval, Ashby, and Rooke.

Nearly two years passed before the third great action of the war. Louis had planned an invasion of England; and to cover it, De Tourville, with a

fleet of sixty-three ships, had put to sea early in May, hoping that the Dutch and English would not by that time have joined up, and that his fleet would be equal to that with Russell. Russell, however, had joined up with the Dutch, called in his own outlying ships, and had no less than ninety-nine fine vessels under his command. De Tourville, on the other hand, had nearly a score of his ships on detached duty, so that when the two fleets met off Cape La Hogue on the 19th May, the superiority of the allies was in the proportion of nearly two to one. This, however, was somewhat discounted by the fact that the Dutch fleet hardly got into action at all, and many of the Blue Squadron ships hardly fired a shot. The brunt of the action fell on Russell's division of thirty-one vessels. De Tourville laid his own flagship, the *Soleil Royal*, a ship of one hundred and six guns, and the pride of the French Navy, alongside Rooke's flagship, the *Britannia*, one hundred, and for an hour and a half the two three-deckers were in close action. The English fire, however, was far quicker than that of the Frenchmen, who eventually seized the opportunity given by the calm and fog to escape for a time. In fact, the heavy fog gave the French the opportunity to slip by the British fleet, and so

make for their own harbours, with Rooke in pursuit. The pursuit continued, until by the 22nd the *Soleil Royal* and two others had been run ashore near Cherbourg and burnt by Sir Ralph Delaval; while thirteen others that had been driven into La Hogue Bay were followed in by Rooke in his boats, and the whole squadron destroyed. One division, however, escaped uninjured by running through the Race of Alderney, where Sir John Ashby, who was in pursuit of them, lacking a pilot, did not dare to follow. For the remainder of the war, the French devoted themselves to commerce raiding, and succeeded in inflicting a very considerable amount of injury on our trade. It was during this period of the war that Commodore Benbow first came to the front. At St Malo was a great nest of privateers, and to Benbow was entrusted the task of its destruction, his force comprising twelve men-of-war and four bomb ships. He had also a monster fireship, which was sent in on the night of 9th November 1693; and, though it struck on a rock before reaching its proper destination, the effect of its explosion was terrific. Three hundred houses were unroofed, and the whole seaward wall of the town was almost demolished. Benbow then demolished the forts,

destroyed all the shipping in the harbour, and returned without the loss of a single man. Several other attacks were also made on the French coast in the years that followed. An attack on Brest in 1694 failed disastrously; but in the same year we burnt Dieppe, and bombarded, and almost destroyed, both Havre and Calais. Similar operations were carried out in 1696, and 1697 saw the war terminated by the Treaty of Ryswick.

Turning to the period of the Dutch wars, we find they owed their origin to two causes. One was commercial jealousy, the other wounded pride. Cromwell's Navigation Act hampered the Dutch trade. In the East Indies, where the Dutch had ousted Portugal, and looked for monopoly, we were becoming their serious rivals. As regards the second cause, the nation that had humbled the sea power of Spain almost as effectually as we had done but a few years before, naturally felt bitterly humiliated when its ships had to strike their flag and salute in what were really their own waters as much as ours.

In May 1652, a certain Captain Young, then commanding an English frigate, fired on and captured a Dutch man-of-war for refusing to strike his ensign in salute to the British flag. Four days

later, Van Tromp, one of the most renowned seamen of the age, flaunted the flag of his Republic under the nose of Blake, who, with a small squadron, was lying at Dover. Blake had but fifteen sail to oppose the forty-two of Van Tromp's squadron. He attacked at once without hesitation, and was very shortly reinforced by a squadron of eight ships, under Captain Nehemiah Bourne, like himself an ex-soldier. Even after the reinforcement, the enemy were nigh double our strength, and a hard fight was maintained throughout the day, until at nightfall the Dutch were glad to take advantage of the darkness and draw off into their own waters, leaving two of their ships as prizes to the English fleet. Blake, moreover, was left in command of the Channel, and many rich prizes bound for Dutch ports were snapped up by his ships. The usual formal declaration of war took place in July; and in the following month a fleet action, on a somewhat large scale, took place between De Ruyter and Ayscue. The two fleets were about equal in strength; and the fight, which lasted from four o'clock in the afternoon until nightfall, was hotly contested, but was practically undecisive. The next action took place on 28th September, when De Witt and De Ruyter

encountered Blake, Penn, and Bourne in the shoal waters of the Kentish Knock, a few miles to the north and east of the North Foreland. Numerically, the fleets were about equal, but individually Blake's ships were of greater power than those of the Dutch. On the other hand, De Witt had the advantage of position; for to win to the weather-gauge the English had to manœuvre in the shoal waters, for which their deep draught made the larger ships unsuitable. More than one, in fact, grounded during the action. The Dutch could manœuvre without risk, for, built to suit their own shallow waters, their ships were broad, flat-bottomed, and of light draught. The upshot of the action was that the Dutch lost four ships—one of them that of a rear-admiral—and again seized on the safety of darkness to seek refuge in their own shallow waters, where Blake could not follow them, though the English fleet chased them to the mouth of the Texel.

By the end of November, Tromp was again afloat with some hundred sail, of which fully four-fifths were large ships. Blake had scattered his fleet, detaching squadrons for the protection of fisheries, coasters, homeward-bound merchantmen, etc. So it happened that when, on the morning

of the 28th, Tromp found the British lying anchored in the Dover Roads, Blake had barely forty sail with his flag, and unit for unit the Dutch possessed the more powerful ships. For instance, Tromp's flagship, the *Brederode*, was of 90 guns, whereas Blake's flagship, the *Triumph*, was only a 60-gun ship. The result of the action was that we were decisively beaten, though not without inflicting a certain amount of injury on the Dutch, and it was after this action that Van Tromp is said to have swept up the Channel with a broom at his masthead. It may be here noted that this was the first sea action of the great Monk, afterwards Duke of Albemarle, who, on this occasion, flew his flag as second in command to Blake.

The triumph of Holland was, however, to be of but brief duration; for, by February, Blake was again afloat with seventy sail, hoping to catch Van Tromp, who, with seventy-three sail, was convoying to their home ports three hundred merchantmen. This he succeeded in doing, Tromp's fleet being sighted on the 18th, off Cape La Hogue, and a running fight up the Channel ensued, which only finished off Boulogne on the 20th. On the first day, Blake, Penn, and Lawson engaged with some twenty ships, despite the fact that the bulk of the

fleet had not yet come up, and so they had for a long time to sustain unsupported the combined attack of the whole Dutch fleet. Blake and Lawson were both wounded, and their flagships, the *Triumph* and *Fairfax*, "wretchedly torn"; and Penn's flagship, the *Speaker*, was towed out of action, a wreck. But as the British ships came up the situation changed, and by nightfall the Dutch men-of-war were heading after their flying convoy, having had certainly the worst of the struggle. On the second day the action was renewed at two in the afternoon, the fleets being then off the coast of the Isle of Wight, and at nightfall of the 19th the Dutch were in full retreat. The pursuit continued until, on the morning of the 20th, the fight was again resumed off Boulogne. Both fleets were by now, however, fairly exhausted; and Van Tromp, beaten to the knees, but still gallantly safeguarding his trust, was able to get his shattered fleet, and his convoy, now diminished by thirty, into his own shoal waters, in soundings where Blake dared not follow.

I may here note that Blake's orders, that no merchantmen were to be sought for till the battle fleet had been disposed of, were most stringent. There was to be no "straggling for loot," and this

emphasises the point that the fleet had at last become the Royal Navy in the true sense of the term. It was no longer a collection of ships composed, to a large extent, of "private adventurers," imbued, no doubt, with the highest patriotism, but none the less mostly, to put it mildly, privateers.

In May the Dutch were again afloat with a fleet of ninety-eight sail, Van Tromp's first performance being to look into Dover Roads, batter Dover Castle, and pick up what commerce he could. Blake had gone northwards; but Monk, Deane, Penn, and Lawson were lying with nigh a hundred sail in Yarmouth Roads, and this fleet at once put to sea, encountering the Dutch off the Essex coast. The fight was a terrific one, and is of special interest, for, for the first time, chain shot, said to have been an invention of De Witt, was used by the Dutch. It was with one of these terrible missiles that, in almost the first broadside of the engagement, Dean's body was severed in twain. Lawson distinguished himself by breaking the enemy's line with his division, a feat to be repeated by Rodney a century and a half later, and at the time hailed as a new development in naval tactics. At nightfall the action was still undecided; but

during the night, Blake, hastening from the north, had joined the fleet with a reinforcement of eighteen ships; and when day broke on the 3rd, it was evident that victory lay in the grasp of the English. Tromp made a desperate effort, laying his flagship, again the 90-gun *Brederode*, alongside Penn's flagship, the *James*, 60, and succeeded in boarding her; but his boarders were driven back, and the English in turn boarded the *Brederode*, when Tromp in despair fired his depleted magazine, the explosion annihilating the boarders and a large portion of the *Brederode's* crew. Tromp, however, remained unhurt, and was able to haul his crippled ship out of action, and transfer his flag to a frigate. The fight, however, was over; and by evening the gallant Dutchmen had drawn off, and sought safety in the Texel. They had lost nine ships, and eleven remained as prizes in our hands.

Once again for the last time in this war the two fleets met on 31st July on the old battle grounds off the Texel. The Dutch, by herculean efforts, had got together a fleet of one hundred and eight sail of the line, twenty-five armed merchantmen, and nine or ten fireships, all under the command of Van Tromp. The English fleet comprised one hundred and twenty sail. Blake was so incapacitated

by his wounds received in the action of February, that he was no longer in command, the British fleet being under Monk, with Penn and Lawson for subordinate flag officers. The battle is one of interest; for not only did fireships, which had by now become recognised components of a fleet, play a great part, but also the line of battle was introduced. Tactics, in fact, had evolved from the half-moon formation and the general mêlée of the Tudor days to the forming of the fleets into line and the concerted action of their separate units. Monk meant that the fight should be to a finish, and his orders were "no quarter." The orders were perhaps brutal; but in those days men had not reached to the stage of civilisation of the twentieth century, and both combatants were exasperated with the long struggle. Tactically the Dutch had the advantage, for they held the weather-gauge, in this case specially favourable, as it gave them opportunities to use their fireships, which they did with effect. Two English ships, the *Oak* and the *Hunter*, were soon in flames; and the *Triumph*, Blake's historic old flagship, was also fired, but was saved from total destruction by the heroic and indomitable efforts of the crew. Dutch hopes rose high, but their hopes were soon shattered, for

a musket ball stretched dead on the poop of his flagship their gallant leader, Van Tromp, perhaps the greatest seaman of the age. Cowed and disheartened, the Dutch were practically beaten. Very soon the battle was over, and what was left of the Dutch fleet was flying for the shelter of the Texel. They had lost some thirty ships, sunk or burnt, and about six thousand men. Our loss was two ships burnt, four hundred dead, and seven hundred wounded. Of the English captains, eight had been killed and five wounded. Moreover, we brought no prizes out of the struggle, nor was the British fleet in a condition to keep the sea after the action. Peace was concluded in the April of 1654.

The second Dutch war broke out when Charles II. had been five years on the throne, and its causes were very much the same as those that brought about the first Dutch war. There was again friction between the East India Companies of the two nations. We were ousting the Dutch on the Guinea coast. A squadron of king's frigates, lent to our African Company, crossed the Atlantic, and seized New Amsterdam, rechristening it New York, after the king's brother, who was the royal patron of the African Company. War was declared in February, and in March the Duke of York was

afloat with a fleet of one hundred and nine men of war and frigates and twenty-eight fireships and ketches. That fine old seaman, Sir William Penn, was in the *Royal Charles*, 78, the Duke of York's flagship, as "Great Captain Commander," or, as we would now style him, "Captain of the Fleet." The vice- and rear-admirals were Prince Rupert and the Earl of Sandwich. Two months later the Dutch mustered a fleet of one hundred and three "men-of-war," seven yachts, eleven fireships, and twelve galliots. This fleet was under the command of Baron Opdam von Wassenaer, with, as subordinate flag officers, Cornelius van Tromp (a son of the great admiral), and Evertzen, and the first fleet action of the war took place on 3rd June. The two fleets encountered off Lowestoft, and the struggle was a fierce one. Sir John Lawson, in the *Royal Oak*, 76, which headed the van division, broke the enemy's line, a manœuvre which was repeated by the Earl of Sandwich, who led the Blue Squadron, thus rehearsing the feat by which Rodney was to win a glorious victory more than a century later. Opdam's own flagship, the *Concord*, 84, was blown up, the admiral and all on board perishing. The *Orange Tree*, 76, shared the same fate. Four Dutch vessels which fouled each other

were all destroyed by a single fireship. In fact, by nightfall the Dutch were completely beaten. They had lost some thirty ships, and the residue of their fleet were hastening to their usual shelter, the shoals off the Texel. The English, however, did not come off scatheless. The *Charity*, 46, was carried off, and, although our losses in killed and wounded were comparatively small, the Navy suffered an irreparable loss in Sir John Lawson, who died a few days later of wounds received in the action. It is of Lawson that Clarendon wrote: —"He was, indeed, of all the men of that time, and of that extraction and education, incomparably the modestest and wisest man and most worthy to be confided in." The Dutch had received a severe blow, and a year passed before they were again at sea, this time with ninety-one ships. We had ninety ships in the Channel; but of these Prince Rupert with thirty had sailed for the mouth of the Channel, deceived by reports that a French reinforcement promised to the Dutch was preparing to sail from Belle-isle. Monk, therefore, had only sixty ships with him, when on 1st June he encountered De Ruyter off the North Foreland. The fight lasted over four days, the night being used to repair damage, and each morning the fight

was renewed with the most desperate animosity and valour. The first two days events went very badly for the British; there was little manœuvring, but an immense amount of hammer and tongs fighting. On both sides the slaughter was terrific. Several of our ships were taken or destroyed, and several of the Dutch ships were also destroyed; and when morning broke on the third day, Monk, with only sixteen ships left fit for action, was retreating, but with his face to the enemy, and fighting every inch of the way. The fortune of war, however, now changed. Prince Rupert, finding he had been deceived, had returned with all speed, and now joined Monk with a most welcome and timely reinforcement, though even this was immediately reduced when the *Royal Prince*, the finest ship in all the fleet, grounded on the Galloper shoal, and was forced to surrender. On the fourth day, the Dutch, even still in considerable superiority, would have been satisfied with what they had already won, but Monk again pressed them. The British were, however, too seriously outnumbered; and towards evening Monk and Rupert acknowledged to a defeat which was, in truth, as glorious as a victory, and drew off. As De Witt, the Chief Minister of Holland, declared:—"If the English were beaten,

their defeat did them more honour than all their former victories; all the Dutch had discovered was that Englishmen might be killed and English ships burned, but English courage was invincible."

Six weeks later, by indomitable energy in refitting, Prince Rupert and Monk were again afloat with eighty ships, encountering De Ruyter with eighty-eight sail in almost the same waters as the previous action. The battle, known as the "St James's Fight," took place on the 5th July 1666, and was of the same stubborn and fierce character that almost invariably characterised our actions with the Dutch. This time, however, our defeat was fully avenged, for with the loss of only one ship we captured or destroyed twenty ships of the enemy; our loss in killed and wounded was about three hundred, while that of the Dutch was seven thousand. Nor did we fail to push our victory, for Rupert attacked the Dutch coast and burnt or sunk some one hundred and sixty merchant vessels, to say nothing of landing on the Island of Schelling, and destroying the immense magazines of naval stores that were there collected.

The Dutch were tired of the war; they had suffered heavily, and had received no aid from their French allies. We also longed for peace; and

negotiations, which were long protracted, commenced in July. Confident of their being brought to a satisfactory peace, the British fleets were allowed to be laid up; and in the spring we had but two small squadrons cruising in the Channel, the one from the Nore, the other from Spithead. There was, however, no armistice. The Dutch had worked at refitting all throughout the winter; and at this juncture De Ruyter put to sea, and, completely unopposed, sailed unchallenged up the Thames, destroyed Sheerness, burnt four of our finest ships, and carried off as prize the *Royal Charles*. This ship was

> "The Naseby, now no longer England's shame,
> But better to be lost in Charles' name,
> Receives her lord,"

of which Dryden sang, and whose name was changed to that of *Royal Charles*, when she was chosen as the finest ship in the Navy to bring back the restored monarch to his kingdom. Monk, however, had entered the Medway before De Ruyter, and had thrown a strong boom across the river. Although the boom was broken and De Ruyter was able to advance as far as Upnor, he lost two ships in so doing; and Monk's resistance was giving valuable time, for Spragge was rapidly

collecting a squadron together, which, though inferior to De Ruyter's, was enough to check his further ravages. De Ruyter's success, in truth, lay more in the disgrace he had inflicted in thus insulting our sea-power than in the actual damage done to his enemy. Peace was signed at Breda on the 21st July, but meanwhile we had gained some solid advantages in West Indian waters. Sir John Harman had defeated a combined French and Dutch squadron in an engagement in which two Dutch ships were captured, and the French lost every ship they had engaged but two. We had, moreover, captured St Eustatius, Tobago, and the Settlement of Surinam, the latter of which only was restored to the Dutch when peace was signed.

The third Dutch war opened in 1672, when Charles II., whose sympathies were Romanist and whose extravagance and greed were tempted by French gold, faithlessly allied himself with France against Holland. The treachery was all the more disgraceful in that we were pledged as allies to the Dutch, having, the year after the Peace of Breda was signed, entered with Holland and Sweden into the Triple Alliance, the object of which was to prevent French aggression in the Netherlands; and

the very fine fleet and funds for its maintenance, with which Parliament had provided the king, had been granted to him for this very purpose. An utterly unprovoked attack on a fleet of Dutch Smyrna merchantmen preceded the declaration of war. The Dutch were ready, and De Ruyter at once sailed with ninety ships and forty fireships. The allied fleet was lying in Solebay on the Suffolk coast. It comprised sixty-five British ships, under the command of the Duke of York and Lord Sandwich, while the French contingent of thirty-six vessels was under the command of the Comte d'Estrees. The allies were more or less taken by surprise, and a desperately stubborn battle ensued. As a matter of fact, the Dutch had an immense superiority, for never at any time did the French take any part in the battle, the whole brunt of the action falling on the English fighting ships. The British also, despite Lord Sandwich's warning, had in Solebay selected a bad position, and many of the ships had to cut their cables to get under way. After two hours' fighting, the *St Michael*, the Duke of York's flagship, was so damaged that His Highness had to shift his flag to the *Loyal London*. The *Royal James*, of 100 guns, flying the flag of Lord Sandwich, was grappled by another fireship,

and burned fiercely, but not before she had sunk one line of battleship and three fireships, and lost two-thirds of her crew, including all her officers except the Earl. Of the survivors of her crew, many escaped in the boats; but Lord Sandwich, who, when objecting to the choice of position at Solebay, had been taunted by the Duke with fear of the enemy, refused to leave the burning ship, and perished with her. On the whole, however, after what De Ruyter described as the "hardest fought battle that he ever saw," the victory was undecided, both sides claiming it. The Dutch had burnt four of our ships, but De Ruyter left one of his finest vessels in our hands as a prize. Another Dutch ship had been sunk, and a second burnt.

In the following year, 1673—the Test Act, meanwhile, having obliged the Duke of York, a Roman Catholic, to resign his command—three more battles were fought, Rupert and Spragge having succeeded the Duke of York and Lord Sandwich. The first of these took place on the anniversary of Solebay; and so fierce was the British attack that Tromp, the Dutch Admiral, was thrice forced to shift his flag, his flagship being disabled.

The second battle was on the 4th June, and, though there was great slaughter, neither side lost a ship.

THE BATTLE OF SOLE BAY

May 28th, 1672

In the third action, Sir Edward Spragge, in the *Royal Prince*, backed his main topsail to await Tromp's flagship, the *Golden Lion*. After three hours' hard fighting the *Royal Prince* was disabled, and Spragge had to leave her for the *St George*. A little later this ship also was so crippled that Spragge determined to shift his flag to the *Royal Charles*; but in rowing to that ship the boat in which the admiral had taken his place was sunk by a round shot, and the gallant seaman perished. All three battles, in fact, were fought with the most determined ferocity, and were practically undecisive in their results. In all three another characteristic was the desertion of the French, in whose fleet scarcely a shot was ever fired. It is, however, only fair to say that in the last of these actions one French officer, Admiral de Martel, exposed himself gallantly with his single ship, but nothing could induce his comrades to follow his example.

The Dutch were anxious for peace; the war was unpopular in England, and Charles knew that supplies to continue it would be difficult to obtain. The Treaty of Peace was signed on 9th February 1674. Since that date, except during the period when Holland was under the dominion or influence

of revolutionary France, we have never again been at war with the Dutch.

The French war of 1689 to 1697 has been described earlier in this chapter; and, although by the Treaty of Ryswick, in 1697, Louis had acknowledged William as king of Great Britain, yet, when in 1701 James died at St Germain, Louis formally acknowledged James's son in that capacity. Preparations for hostilities were at once put in hand, and alliances entered into with Holland and Germany. When, in March 1702, William died, the change of sovereigns made no difference in England's policy, the three allies declaring war against France in the beginning of May 1702.

At the outbreak of hostilities Rooke was placed in command of the fleet, Benbow having a detached squadron in West Indian waters. It was on the latter that the first fleet action of the war devolved. On the 19th August, with one 70, his flagship, the *Breda*, one 64, the *Defiance*, one 54, the *Greenwich*, and four 48 gun frigates (*Ruby*, *Pendennis*, *Windsor*, and *Falmouth*), he encountered Du Casse off Santa Martha, on the South American coast, who had with him four battleships, one frigate, and some smaller craft. It was late, however, and night fell before the enemy were overtaken; and

on the morning of the 20th, Benbow, supported by one of the frigates, the *Ruby*, was alone near the enemy. The others had intentionally kept far astern. All the next day and night the *Breda* and the *Ruby* kept on the heels of the French, until on the 21st, Du Casse, seeing the rest so far off, turned and attacked. The *Ruby* suffered severely, but was ably supported by the *Breda*. While the unequal conflict was raging, the *Defiance* and *Windsor* actually came up level with the enemy without firing a shot. On the next day, the 22nd, the *Greenwich* behaved even worse, keeping five leagues from the admiral, and, the wind shifting, Du Casse, who, of course, knew nothing of the conduct of Benbow's treacherous captains, continued his retreat. On the 23rd, however, Benbow again caught up and engaged the whole of the enemy's fleet, single-handed; when at last, Captain Vincent of the *Falmouth*, beginning to feel some shame, came into action beside him. On the 24th, Benbow, still supported by the *Falmouth*, renewed the action, but early in the day he was terribly wounded, his right leg being shattered by a chain-shot; and, the French squadron being in full flight, pursuit was abandoned. It is good to know that before Benbow died of the terrible injuries he had suffered he saw

justice inflicted on the captains who had so disgraced their cloth. Captains Fogg (*Breda*) and Vincent (*Falmouth*) were suspended, but forgiven in consideration of their behaviour in the fight; Captain Constable (*Windsor*) was cashiered and imprisoned at the king's pleasure; Captain Hudson (*Pendennis*) died during the trial; Captain Wade (*Greenwich*), who was proved to have been drunk the whole of the time of the fight, and Captain Kirkby (*Defiance*), who had instigated the whole treacherous plot, were both sentenced to be shot, they being sent home, and the sentence carried out on board the *Bristol* at Plymouth. Benbow himself received a letter from Du Casse, which ran:—

> Sir,—I had little hopes on Monday last but to have supped in your cabin; but it pleased God to order it otherwise. I am thankful for it. As for those treacherous captains that deserted you, hang them up; for, by God, they deserve it.—Yours,
>
> Du Casse.

No event of moment occurred during 1703, with one exception. This was the attack on the West Indies galleons' fleet and its escort in Vigo Bay in October of that year. Rooke himself led the attack. A boom placed by the enemy was broken, and the harbour entered, where fifteen French and three

Spanish ships of the line, seven French frigates, and fifteen Spanish galleons were captured or burnt. In fact, every vessel of every kind in the harbour was taken or destroyed and immense booty seized, for at least two millions sterling had not been landed from the galleons before the British had seized them. On our side the loss of life was but small, and no ship was lost.

In July 1704, Rooke, then in command of the Mediterranean, conceived the daring idea of seizing Gibraltar. Rooke had with him a squadron of English and Dutch ships, which, reinforced a short time previously by the arrival of Sir Cloudesley Shovel, were now at a strength of sixty, and with these he anchored on the 21st in Gibraltar Bay. Gibraltar had always been deemed impregnable, and, under this erroneous idea, the garrison had been depleted to supply men for the Spanish army in the field. One thousand eight hundred men were landed on the Isthmus that cuts off the Rock from the mainland, and the town incessantly bombarded. So fierce was the bombardment that, on the 23rd July, no less than fifteen thousand shot were fired into the defences of the fortress in five hours, and the garrison was at last driven to evacuate the South Mole Head. The boats of the

fleet were sent in to take possession of the abandoned batteries, but they had been mined, and, when the British entered, the train was fired, about a hundred men being killed and wounded. The position, however, was held; and later a fresh redoubt, lying between the Mole and the town, having fallen into our hands, the governor on a second summons agreed to a surrender. The garrison was allowed to march out with all the honours of war, and then the British colours were hoisted over the famous Rock, to remain flying there till this day.

Rooke's great triumph was to be followed within a month by another action with the French fleet; for on Sunday, the 13th August, with a fleet of fifty-three ships, he encountered the French with fifty ships of the line and twenty-four galleys, the whole under the command of Admiral Comte de Toulouse, who hove to off Malaga to await the British attack. The fight was a tough one. The French were greatly aided by their galleys, which were able to supply disabled ships with fresh crews or tow them out of action; but our superiority in gunnery and quickness of fire gave us such distinct advantage, that by two o'clock their leading squadron was beaten back, several of their ships destroyed, including one three-decker, *La Fier*, of 88 guns.

The fight, however, continued until midnight, when, under cover of the darkness, and aided by a fair wind, Toulouse withdrew, and returned to Toulon.

After Sir George Rooke's victory off Malaga he returned home, where, although popularly received as a hero, he was, owing to party prejudices, superseded in his command, this devolving on Sir Cloudesley Shovel, under whom were Sir John Leake and rear-admirals Byng and Dilkes. Twice in 1704 and 1705 strenuous efforts for the re-capture of Gibraltar were made, but in both cases Sir John Leake came to its aid, landed reinforcements to the garrison, and decisively defeated the French ships that were attempting sea attacks on the fortress. Blockade on the land side was, of course, useless whilst we held command of the sea, which enabled us to throw in supplies and reinforcements at pleasure.

In the following year, 1707, Leake's principal exploit was the capture of Minorca, of which the superb harbour of Port Mahon was of great value to us in future wars, until, in 1782, the Island was restored to Spain.

The year also was marked by the death of Sir Cloudesley Shovel. Shovel, who had recently reduced Barcelona and bombarded Toulon, was re-

turning to England with his fleet. On the evening of 2nd October, through some terrible blunder, the fleet ran into the shoal waters on the reefs that skirt the Scilly Isles. The *Association*, Shovel's flagship, went down with all hands; three other ships, the *Eagle*, *Romney*, and *Firebrand* sharing the same fate. The *St George* struck, but was lifted off by another wave, and not much damaged. Sir Cloudesley Shovel's body was the next day washed ashore, and received burial in Westminster Abbey.

To detail all the minor actions of the concluding years of the war is forbidden by considerations of space, but there is one that demands allusion, for, though it was a defeat in the strict sense of the word, yet it is one of the most honourable records amongst the glorious annals of the Navy. We have already alluded to the extent to which the French had developed commerce raiding, and in this direction none had met with more success than the Count de Forbin and M. de Duguai Trouin. On account of the French successes in this direction, our merchant fleets dared not travel singly, but had to be collected into convoys under man-of-war protection. Such a convoy, consisting of one hundred and thirty vessels, formed the Lisbon fleet, which, in October 1707, left England. The con-

voying force comprised the *Cumberland* and *Devonshire*, both 80's, and the *Royal Oak*, 76, together with two 50-gun ships, the *Ruby* and *Chester*. These latter were to take the convoy to their Portuguese port, but the large ships were only to see the merchant fleet clear of soundings. They had not cleared the Channel, however, when off the Lizard they found themselves in the grip of the united squadrons of Forbin and Duguai Trouin, comprising twelve sail of the line. The only chance was to give the overwhelming enemy as tough a fight as possible, so that the war-ships whilst perishing would give the merchant ships a chance to effect their escape. From noon till dusk the one-sided action continued, the tactical skill of both sides being very marked, but naturally there could be only the one result. The *Cumberland*, after gallantly holding out under the attack of three French ships until she was dismasted and rendered absolutely defenceless, struck her flag to Duguai Trouin. The *Devonshire* kept up a running fight with five of the French ships until, near dusk, she blew up, two only out of her crew of seven hundred being saved. The *Royal Oak* was boarded by the *Achill*; but was able, after a desperate and long-continued encounter, to free herself, and escape

into Kinsale. A year later, Captain Wilde, of the *Royal Oak*, was court-martialled, with the result that he was cashiered from the Royal Navy, a sentence which, to say the least of it, seemed to err on the side of severity. Both the *Chester* and the *Ruby* were captured, but Commodore Richard Edwards had effected his purpose. Not a single one of the merchant ships was captured, all arriving in safety at Lisbon.

In the spring of 1711 the death of the emperor, and the succession to the Austrian throne of the Archduke Charles, whose claim to the Spanish throne we were championing against France, completely altered the situation. The union of Spain and Austria under one throne would be as detrimental to the balance of power as for the crowns of France and Spain to be held in common. Moreover, the Whigs had gone out, and the Tories, openly resolved to make peace, had come in. Negotiations dragged for some months, but early in 1713 peace was finally concluded at Utrecht.

Before, however, proceeding to deal with the Navy of the earlier Georgian period, it is necessary to briefly sketch the progress the Navy had made during the period which has just been reviewed. We have seen in the last chapter that on the

accession of James I. the fleet comprised forty-two ships, of 17,055 total tons burden, and running in size from sloops of from 40 to 50 tons to the ship of the line, running from 500 to 1000 tons. At the death of Queen Anne, the whole fleet numbered no less than two hundred and forty-seven vessels, with a total tonnage of 167,219 tons. Moreover, the ships had increased tremendously in size. For example, the first rate ships of the fleet averaged not far short of 17,000 tons' displacement. Again, there had been a definite division of ships into classes, and a distinct demarcation between the ship meant for the line of battle and the frigate or cruiser class of vessel. An abstract of the Navy taken on the 1st August 1714, shows that the line strength of the fleet amounted to one hundred and thirty-one ships, with a total displacement of 130,173 tons. Of these, seven belonged to the first rate, each carrying one hundred guns; in the second rate were thirteen ships, each carrying ninety guns; the third and fourth rates were each composed of ships of two types—in the third rate there were sixteen 80-gun ships and twenty-six 70-gun ships; in the fourth rate there were nineteen 60-gun ships and fifty 50-gun ships. Of ships outside the line, there were one hundred and sixteen, with

a total tonnage of 37,046. Of these, sixty-seven were small craft, classed as fifth and sixth rates. In the fifth rate were twenty-four 40-gun ships and eighteen 30-gun ships; in the sixth rate were twenty-four 20-gun ships and one small craft of ten guns. The remainder included small craft and various auxiliaries, among which were four bomb ships, fifteen yachts, and seven sloops.

The old type of gun with its diverse nomenclature had gone out of fashion, and guns were classed by the weight of their ordnance. For example, under Queen Anne, thirty-two pounders (forty-two pounders in some of the larger first rates) were mounted on the lower deck, eighteen pounders on the middle, and nine pounders on the main and upper decks; in 80-gun ships there were twenty-four pounders on the lower, twelve pounders on the middle, and nine pounders on the upper deck; in 70- and 60-gun ships, the lower deck carried twenty-four pounders and eighteen pounders, the upper nine pounders; in 50-gun ships there were twelve pounders below and six pounders on the upper decks. Considerable improvements in the mounting also had been effected. In *personnel*, as well as in material, the fleet had also become systemised. A regular corps of officers had been

formed; regulations for admission to the Navy had been formulated, and the qualifications entitling to the rank of lieutenant defined. Some officers, known as "king's letter boys," were allowed to enter as volunteers, and these generally served at sea under some distinguished officer or court favourite. Byng, afterwards Lord Torrington, joined the Navy in this way. Others, again, entered under the "servant system." These went to sea with a friend, and were either rated as "servant" or "A.B." or some other rating. None the less, however, were they intended for the rank of officers, and served their apprenticeships on the quarter-deck, as did the "king's letter boys." One, afterwards most noted, to enter the service in this fashion was Sir Cloudesley Shovel. Finally, there were, in exceptional cases, men who won to a commission through the hawseholes, that is to say, were promoted from the lower deck. Two well-known officers who thus won to the quarter-deck are Benbow and Dampier.

Prior to Charles II., officers, whether admirals, captains, or lieutenants, were discharged to the shore as soon as their ship had been paid off; but under this monarch the system of half pay was established, and by the end of the seventeenth

century it had become permanent. The number, however, on half pay was limited, the privilege being confined to ten flag officers, at rates ranging from 17s. 6d. to £2, 10s. a day; fifty captains, who received 8s. or 10s. per diem; one hundred lieutenants at 2s. 6d. and 2s., and thirty masters at the same salary. As to pay, it varied for captains according to their command, the captain of a sixth rate, for example, receiving but £14 a month, while he of a first rate drew a salary of £42 per month. The pay of a lieutenant and a master was much about the same, and varied from £7 to £8, 8s. per month. For the rest, the monthly pay was, for surgeons, £5; a purser, £2 to £4; gunners, boatswains, and carpenters about the same as a purser; midshipmen from £1, 10s. to £2, 5s.

Since Charles II. the complements of ships were of three classes:—seamen, landsmen (although this rating was not authorised), and marines. As regards the second, we find, for example, that in the year of Solebay, 1672, numbers of persons imprisoned for debt petitioning His Majesty to allow them to spend the rest of their lives in his service at sea. The request was granted, and no doubt the services of sturdy landsmen were utilised when attainable, and the press-gang did not concern

itself much with the sea experience of those whom they pressed for the king's service at sea. Finally, and most interesting of all, that superb corps, the Royal Marines, had come into being, for we find the first mention of Marines as a distinct force made in an Order of Council, dated 16th October 1664, which authorises the raising of one thousand two hundred soldiers, "to be formed into a regiment of one thousand two hundred men for service on board the fleet." This, known as the Admiral's or Maritime Regiment, is said to have been recruited from the London watermen, and the uniform was yellow, with scarlet facings. Several other Marine corps were raised under William III. and Mary and under Queen Anne; and it is for their glorious services at Gibraltar, both in its capture and in its defence afterwards, that the Marines have the sole battle honour allotted to them—that of "Gibraltar." As is the case with the "Royal Regiment of Artillery," and the "Corps of Royal Engineers," their battle honours are too numerous to be specifically enumerated.

CHAPTER IV

THE EARLY GEORGIAN NAVY

THE period of history to be treated in this chapter is undoubtedly one of the most important and significant in all our naval annals — important, because, in the hands of great seamen, it saw the birth of the Navy which gave us victory at the end of the century and in the crowning triumph of Trafalgar; and significant because that Navy was uplifted by these men from a certain decline and falling away from high standards, which marked the earlier part of the period under review. The decline was the consequence, to some extent, of the exhaustion which fell upon all the European powers after the great wars of the seventeenth century; and there was no Navy, until far on in the century that followed, in a condition to contest with us the dominant position which our exertions had won. Our undisputed supremacy of the seas dates from the long war which concluded with the Peace of

Utrecht. Before that war we were but one of the sea powers of Europe; we issued from it the sea power without any second. For the first time we became a great Mediterranean power. Though the rivalry of the Dutch was at an end, and their long commercial and naval contest with us could no longer be maintained, they resisted our dominance as long as they could, by diplomatic endeavours, and exerted every artifice to prevent us from retaining Gibraltar and Port Mahon, as well as the concession of the Spanish slave trade. These were the things that promised to confirm our naval supremacy.

But the century which at the beginning saw us raised to the dominion of the seas was to witness that remarkable phenomenon of an incipient and growing decay, already alluded to, which ultimately brought us to what is always regarded as the lowest ebb in our naval history. There was a decrease of keenness and zeal in the service, and a general decline, from which the Navy was afterwards lifted by the genius and earnestness of Hawke, Rodney, and their compeers and followers. It is this singular feature of decay and regeneration that gives its high interest to the period that followed the Peace of Utrecht. The disputed succession to

the throne, and weariness of prolonged strife, made the nation disinclined for new activity. Walpole was, above all things, a peace minister; and, whatever may have been the merits of his policy, it led to neglect of the naval and military services and the sapping of professional interest, and ultimately it affected the competence of sea officers. Between the battle of Malaga in 1704 and the fresh outbreak of war in 1739, there was no event of much naval importance, except the action off Cape Passaro in 1718; and the leaders and administrators of the Navy, for mere want of employment or the urgent need of exertion, had become in a measure superannuated. In 1719, the tonnage dimensions of ships were unwisely fixed, with the unfortunate result that the shipwrights were almost obliged to stand still, while the French and Spaniards in these practical matters went ahead of us; so that in 1745, when we were again at war, our 70-gun ships were pronounced to be little superior to the French 52-gun ships. British men-of-war were then inferior craft, narrow in beam, lean-bowed, and generally so deficient that, in pitching and rolling, bad weather imperilled their masts, with the result that ultimately foreign ships were adopted as our models, and prizes we took from the French were always

found leading in the chase. It is necessary to remember these things, because, if we measure the extent to which the Navy declined, we shall be the better able to appreciate the great achievements of those who made it the potent instrument of warfare, which in their own actions they afterwards proved it to be.

But the Treaty of Utrecht did not mean any actual peace, because the Spaniards had no real notion of observing its specific conditions, and it was their dream to recover all they had renounced. This attitude presented new dangers for European peace; and Cardinal Alberoni, taking a bold initiative, proffered help to the Jacobite cause, in order to paralyse England and enable Spain to recover the provinces in Italy which she had lost. England and France together resisted these pretensions; and in the summer of 1718, when a Spanish force landed in Sicily, the appearance of an English squadron was followed by an engagement on 31st July, in which the Spanish fleet was all but destroyed. In command of the British squadron was Sir George Byng, with his flag in the *Barfleur*, 90, who had with him in all twenty-one ships of the line; while Castañeta, the Spanish admiral, had but eighteen ships, inferior in weight and metal.

The two countries were not at war, but Byng seized the opportunity with great promptness, while Castañeta showed both irresolution and uncertainty as to what he should do. His fleet, withdrawing in a leisurely fashion before the wind, was pursued, overhauled, and almost destroyed by the concentration of fire upon its rearmost ships; the Spanish flagship, *Real Felipe*, of 74 guns, being taken by the *Superb*, 60, and the *Kent*, 70; while the *Principe de Asturias*, of 70 guns, yielded to the combined attack of three ships of the same rating. It is noteworthy that Anson, Mathews, and Lestock all took part in this action, in which, as Byng's secretary said, "the English might be rather said to have made a seizure than to have gotten a victory." But the object was attained, and Byng came home to be created Viscount Torrington.

For some years no further actions took place, though we were embroiled with the northern powers; but irregular hostilities were conducted with Spain, and, in 1726, Vice-Admiral Hosier went with a squadron to the West Indies. It illustrates the state into which the Navy had fallen, that he was sent out with ships entirely unfitted for the service, badly provisioned, and already reeking with disease. It was said at the time that, for every man who

died in action, ten died through bad provisions; and such was the horrible condition in Hosier's squadron that he buried his ships' companies twice over, and eventually died himself, broken-hearted—to appear afterwards to Admiral Vernon, according to the legend, with his men, "all in dreary hammocks shrouded, which, for winding-sheets, they wore," to quote Glover's pathetic ballad. The Spanish *guarda costas* were preying upon English merchantmen in the West Indies and infesting the coasts of the islands; and repeated complaints were made of the brutalities that were practised and the hardships that were endured by British seamen. The Spaniards were exercising their right of search and capture, but that they did it harshly there can be no question. Rear-Admiral Charles Stewart, writing to the Duke of Newcastle, said that it was a little unreasonable for us to do injuries, and not know how to bear them; but that villainy was inherent in the climate. The merchants at home were making bitter complaints, and the nation was on fire with the tale of the atrocities. Letters were read in the House of Commons concerning our brave seamen lying in chains in Spanish dungeons. Sea-captains came to the bar of the House, and told how they had been loaded with

irons, fed on the vilest food, and driven to work like galley slaves for Spanish taskmasters; and, to crown all, Captain Jenkins, of the *Rebecca*, presented himself before Parliament, destitute of an ear, which he said had been brutally torn off, with the taunt that he had better carry it to the king. When asked what he thought of his plight, Jenkins replied, "I commended my soul to my God, and my cause to my country"—a phrase which seems to have in it something of the prompting of a parliamentary hand, though there is evidence enough that Jenkins had been most cruelly ill-treated.

Vernon, in command of a squadron which he was at great pains to bring to efficiency, therefore proceeded against the Spanish possessions, with his flag in the *Burford*, and, in November 1740, proceeded to attack Porto Bello, which he had stated in the House of Commons could be captured with half a dozen ships. He delivered his attack on the 21st November, and the place was reduced after a feeble defence, the intelligence being received with great enthusiasm in England. Reinforcements were hurried out; but, in 1741, Vernon failed before Cartagena and Santiago, and returned discredited to England. He is best known to us as the inventor of "grog," for he watered the sea-

man's rum, and was known to them as "Old Grog," because he wore a grogram coat. But his high abilities should not be lost sight of in his failures at Cartagena and Santiago, or his invention of the new beverage, for, wherever we look, we find that few officers then held so high a place as this energetic, sturdy, faithful, and capable man. In him we note the beginning of that new spirit which broke with the formalism which had crept over the Navy and led to a new conception of tactics, implying the concentration of superior force against inferior force, which was afterwards brought to practical effect by Hawke, Rodney, and their successors.

Another officer of great fame, undaunted courage, unfailing enterprise, and strong endurance, was Commodore Anson, who was sent out to the Pacific in 1740, handicapped by his very imperfect squadron of six ships, manned largely by veterans from Chelsea Hospital, including one man who had been wounded at the battle of the Boyne. Some of these people deserted even before the ships set sail, and the squadron suffered terribly in the gales in going round Cape Horn, Anson arriving alone in the *Centurion*, at Juan Fernandez, in June 1741. Some other vessels joined him, stricken

with scurvy, and one of them had to be destroyed as rotten. Any man of less resolution than he would have abandoned the enterprise altogether. Yet, with his two remaining ships, Anson captured several rich prizes, while suffering terrible vicissitudes; and at last his own ship, the *Centurion*, alone remained, in a pitiable state, leaking at every seam, and her crew perishing from scurvy. Notwithstanding all these disadvantages, the *Centurion*, bearing away for the Ladrones, captured the great Spanish treasure-ship, *Nuestra Señora de Covadonga*, which had sailed from Acapulco for Manila, thus inflicting a serious blow upon the Spaniards in the Pacific. Anson's courage and resource never failed him; and at length, having circumnavigated the world, he brought home the weather-beaten, richly-laden *Centurion*, to the delight of the whole nation. He will also be remembered as a great administrator, who afterwards did much to improve the discipline of the Navy, and to provide the weapon which Boscawen, Hawke, and their comrades used so well.

Anson's cruise of circumnavigation was a magnificent achievement, typical of the man, and still more of the men who were coming; but he was one of a small band, and in other parts of the world the Navy was not adding to its renown. The French

had taken up arms for the Spaniards, though without a proper declaration of war; and a squadron left Brest to join the Spanish ships in the Mediterranean at the beginning of 1743. Admiral Mathews was then in those waters with eighteen sail of the line; but, except in men like Anson, professional competence had fallen to a low ebb, as is more clearly shown by the two great failures in the Mediterranean than by anything else—one the miscarriage in Mathews's action off Toulon in 1744, and the other the lamentable incompetence of John Byng at Minorca in 1756. In the former case, Mathews, who was a resolute and competent officer, had with him twenty-eight ships of the line and seven smaller vessels, while the French and Spaniards also numbered twenty-eight, and it was his object to bring them to action as they left Toulon for a Spanish port. They were at sea on 9th February; and on the 11th, the line of battle being ill-formed, Mathews hoisted the signal to engage the enemy, who were endevouring to escape. Between Mathews and Lestock, his second in command, there was unconcealed enmity; and the latter, who was far astern, sheltering himself behind the rules of naval formalism, took no steps to support his superior, who, mortified at Lestock's

inaction, closely engaged the adversary with the ships in his immediate neighbourhood. In the *Namur* he bore down within short range of the *Real Felipe*, flagship of Admiral Navarro. The conflict became very hot, and Mathews was supported by the *Marlborough*, which was magnificently fought by Cornwall, her captain, who was killed, and by some others; but several captains were afterwards cashiered for holding aloof. The ships got to terribly close quarters, and the *Namur* was so badly damaged that Mathews had to shift his flag to the *Russell*, while the *Marlborough* was reduced almost to a wreck. Another captain who gave proof of qualities that others lacked was the future Lord Hawke, in the *Berwick*, who bore down upon the *Poder*, of 60 guns, and compelled her to strike her colours. Afterwards she had to be abandoned, and the action was inconclusive. Mathews had broken through the rules of the Fighting Instructions, but the upshot was that he was dismissed from the service, as "the principal cause of the miscarriage"; while Lestock, who had scarcely fired a shot, was honourably acquitted. Thus was homage paid to the fetish of the regular line of battle, opposed ship to ship of the enemy, and the principle discredited of concentration of

strength against weakness. The Fighting Instructions had the effect of benumbing the zeal of officers; though some, like Mathews, Hawke, and Cornwall, were beginning to realise that they violated in practice a fundamental principle of warfare.

War was formally declared between England and France in March 1744, but no actions of any importance followed, and the Jacobite rising of 1745 turned the attention of English people to internal affairs. There was, however, fighting both in India and America, and the French prepared to send reinforcements to both those parts of the world. The purpose was foiled by Anson and Hawke—by the former in his brilliant and decisive victory over De la Jonquière, off Cape Finisterre, on the 3rd May 1747, in which he captured or destroyed a large part of a fleet of ships of the line, frigates, and storeships, which had set sail from Brest; and by the latter in his hard-fought and very successful engagement with De l'Etenduère on the 14th October in the same year, the French squadron being effectually crippled by the judgment and dash of Hawke and the zealous support of Rodney, Saumarez, and others of his captains. Meanwhile, Boscawen on the coast of India and Knowles in the West Indies were carrying on hostilities

when the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed in 1748.

But the peace was little more than a truce and a breathing space before hostilities again broke out, for the rivalry between France and England was increasing, and bringing us into conflict in both hemispheres. The English and French East India Companies were contesting with one another, and the jealousy and rivalry of the colonists in America became a constant source of danger, while our presence in the Mediterranean was still a serious offence to the French and Spaniards alike. They resented our possession of Gibraltar, and regarded our retention of Minorca as a veritable outrage. General Blakeney, a veteran of 82, was in command at Minorca, and John Byng was hurried out to frustrate the attack that was being made upon him. The French were already besieging Port Mahon, when Byng came on the scene. The two fleets were equally matched, each consisting of twelve ships of the line, though the French ships were superior, and M. de la Galissonnière, who was in command, was a very capable officer. It was Byng's imperative duty to prevent him from landing his troops, and, when he sighted the French on the 20th May, Rear-Admiral Temple West, his second in

AN EARLY TYPE OF FRIGATE, H.M.S. *JUNO*

1750

command, bore down and commenced the attack. Byng, however, did not get into action so quickly, and there was no decisive result at nightfall, though some of our ships had suffered a good deal, in masts, sails, and rigging, especially those in the van with Admiral West. In the morning the situation was such that Byng, showing his irresolution, summoned a council of war, on the advice of which he gave up the relief of Minorca, and left for Gibraltar, which also was threatened. General Blakeney held out for ten days longer, but at last was obliged to capitulate; and the loss of Minorca, which was a great national disaster, exasperated the British nation beyond measure. Byng was no coward, but he had more lamentably failed even than Mathews, and with far more serious consequences, and his action was condemned by most of his contemporaries, though Pitt endeavoured to defend him. There had been many other examples of weak and inefficient action as well as of errors of conduct, but Byng illustrated them on a great scale, and he was condemned. The court-martial expressed the opinion that he should have caused his ships to tack together, and should immediately have borne down upon the enemy, his van stretching to the enemy's van, his rear for its rear, each ship making

for the one opposite to her in the enemy's line, under such sail as would have enabled the worst sailer to preserve her station in the line of battle. Byng had neither observed this old formalism in the attack, nor had he shown resolution in the affairs committed to him; and being found guilty, though acquitted of cowardice, he was condemned to death, and shot on the 14th March, 1757, displaying fortitude in his last moments, and himself giving the signal to the marines who were detailed to carry the execution into effect.

We are now to take account of the regeneration of the Navy after this moral and material decline, and to note the influence of the sport of Boscawen and Hawke, and then of Rodney, Samuel Hood, and others. The genius of Hawke set the seal upon a new spirit, which became that of the Navy at large; and a new and strenuous character of professional ability became manifest in the Navy in the years that followed. Much fighting took place in other parts of the world, and three times was Pocock engaged with D'Aché on the coasts of India. He secured no brilliant victories, but the purposes of the French were defeated, Lally surrendered, and efforts to establish a commanding position for the French in India were rendered un-

availing. But nearer home France was strengthening her position again. Through the incompetence of Byng we had lost Minorca, and Corsica now fell into French hands. Hawke was concerned in descents upon the French coasts; and Boscawen proceeded to America, and, with the troops under General Amherst, brought about the surrender of Cape Breton, and led to the great expedition against Quebec, under Admiral Saunders and General Wolfe.

It was now recognised by the French that nothing but a determined blow struck at the heart of England could bring the war to a successful issue, and the Duc de Choiseul therefore made preparations for an invasion of this country. It was the intention that De la Clue with twelve sail of the line, leaving Toulon, should co-operate with a fleet of twenty-one ships which Conflans had at Brest; while a squadron of frigates at Dunkirk, under Thurot, was to seize an opportunity of making a diversion in Scotland or Ireland. These naval operations were to cover the embarkation of troops, which were to cross in flat-bottomed boats, to be assembled in the French channel ports and on the Bay of Biscay, with Quiberon Bay as a rendezvous. Boscawen was at Gibraltar refitting his ships when

he received intelligence, on the 17th August, 1759, that his adversary had left Toulon and was in sight with twelve ships of the line. Making extraordinary efforts, he got his ships to sea; and shortly after noon, on the 18th August, the action commenced with firing between the *Culloden* and the French sternmost ship, the *Centaur*. Not until four o'clock in the afternoon could Boscawen, in the *Namur*, get into action with the three sternmost ships, while signalling to the ships in his van to push on and engage the head of the enemy's line. The *Namur* soon lost her mizzenmast and two topsail-yards, and was disabled and dropped astern, Boscawen shifting his flag to the *Newark*. De la Clue then endeavoured to get away; but the *Centaur*, after a hard fight and greatly damaged, was captured. The pursuit was continued during the night, and De la Clue had to run his flagship ashore in Lagos Bay. He was himself seriously wounded, and died shortly after landing. His flagship was destroyed, the *Redoutable* was burnt, and the *Téméraire* and *Modeste* were captured.

In this vigorous engagement Boscawen had played his part in upsetting the plans of De Choiseul, but the purpose of invading England was utterly defeated by Hawke. This great seaman, as captain

Mahan has said, was one of the first in British naval annals who belonged distinctively to the eighteenth century rather than the seventeenth. In Mathews's engagement off Toulon he had carried his ship into close action with his appointed adversary, and then had engaged and captured a hard-fighting Spaniard. In this Hawke may be regarded as a precursor of Nelson in his brilliant initiative in the battle of St Vincent. When Byng came home from the Mediterranean, after his great failure, Hawke had succeeded him, and had shown uncommon vigour in the command. Now he was to exercise his vigilance in holding a tight grip upon Brest, and therein he gave proof of his tenacity, daring, and great professional skill. In all that hard service he showed equal resolution and strength; and his final opportunity came on the 20th November 1759, when he set the seal upon his fame in the great victory of Quiberon Bay. His capacity as a seaman had been hardened by his experience in the winter gales and the navigation of dangerous coasts, and his handling of his squadron was a magnificent illustration of boldness tempered by caution, and a readiness to take great risks for edequate objects. In this characteristic of his mind and professional qualities Hawke was certainly akin to Nelson. It

has been shown how Boscawen had dealt with the squadron of De la Clue. Hawke's system of blockade at Brest was that practised in subsequent blockades by St Vincent and Cornwallis, to keep an inshore squadron watching the exit from the Goulet, while the main force was cruising upon a rendezvous ready to bring the French to action if they came out. In instituting his system, Hawke showed his original mind, his object being to control the enemy at the entrance of his own port, instead of allowing him to issue forth with the possibility of attaining his object, or of having to be brought to action in the North Sea or the Channel. Hawke had been battling with the elements for three days in November, and, on the 16th, he learned that a French fleet had been seen on the previous day seventy-five miles north-west of Belleisle. This was a force, under Bompart, returning from the West Indies ; and about the same time Conflans had sailed from Brest, just when Hawke was able to get out of Torbay. The British admiral then came to the conclusion that the enemy were bound for Quiberon. He therefore made all sail, and, on the 20th November, one of his frigates far ahead signalled the presence of the French fleet. Conflans was evidently attempting to reach the bay without fighting, and Hawke

THE BATTLE OF QUIBERON BAY

1759

therefore signalled to his seven headmost ships to chase and form a line of battle ahead of him, endeavouring to delay the French till the rest of the squadron should come up. The British ships carried every stitch of canvas which they could bear; and at length the *Dorsetshire*, which was leading, opened fire.

Conflans, meanwhile, was making every effort to round the formidable rocks which are the breakwater to Quiberon Bay; and neither Hawke nor his captains had anything to rely upon but the most imperfect surveys in this perilous navigation. He knew, however, that the occasion was one of supreme importance, and was not to be deterred from his purpose of destroying the French fleet. He was warned by the sailing master of his flagship of the dangers ahead, to whom he said, "You have done your duty in warning me; now lay us alongside the French commander-in-chief." The November day was drawing to an end; but in the fading day, and in the peril of the fringing reefs, with a wind fast rising, the fleet bore onward. Daylight was failing, and Conflans had assured himself that Hawke would not dare to follow him round those ragged reefs of the Cardinals. But Hawke was all for the old way of fighting—to make downright

work with them. As Captain Mahan says, this was the most dramatic of sea-fights. "Forty-odd tall ships, pursuers and pursued, under reefed canvas, in fierce career drove furiously on; now rushing headlong down the forward slope of a great sea, now rising on its crest as it swept beyond them; now seen, now hidden; the helmsmen straining at the wheels, upon which the huge hulls, tossing their prows from side to side, tugged like a maddened horse, as though themselves feeling the wild 'rapture of the strife' that animated their masters, rejoicing in their strength and defying the accustomed rein." It was a tremendous conflict, and the roaring of the guns and the fury of the storm made assuredly one of the most tremendous pictures in our naval history. The ships rolled deeply in the sea, and the lower gun ports could not be opened without peril. "But they took the foe for pilot and the cannon's glare for light." By five o'clock two of the French ships had struck and two had been sunk; but it was now too dark, and Hawke was in the midst of the shoals, while the wind was blowing hard on the lee-shore, and he therefore anchored. But the work was done, and Conflans' fleet was partly destroyed, and for the rest broken up and dispersed. To Hawke the

work was incomplete, and two of his ships were lost through grounding, but he had shown most daring seamanship, and the French plans were brought to naught. He had proved himself the ablest sea officer of his time, and he embodied the spirit of the Navy that was to come.

There was now no danger of an invasion of our shores, and the fleet had exercised its true function in protecting us. As Mr Henry Newbolt says—

"The guns that should have conquered us, they rusted on the shore,
The men that would have mastered us, they drummed and marched no more:
For England was England, and a mighty brood she bore,
When Hawke came sweeping from the west."

Yet great as was the victory, and vital to the nation as were its results, those who won it had no proper reward. Hawke himself for this victory, which is one of the greatest in our naval history, received no more than £1500 a year; while Sir Charles Hardy, second in command, received nothing. As to the seamen, they fared worse than before; and salt junk, weak beer, and weevily or mouldy biscuit filled up the measure of their misfortune, which was expressed in the well-known lines—

"Ere Hawke did bang
Monsieur Conflang,
You gave us beef and beer;
Now Monsieur's beat,
We've nought to eat,
Since you have nought to fear."

Spain now joined the French against us, but the result of the war was not altered, and the Spaniards suffered heavily. The great Rodney, then a rear-admiral, with his flag in the *Marlborough*, joined Commodore Barton at Barbadoes; and in the operations that followed, all the French possessions in the West Indies fell into our hands, while Pocock captured Havana with the help of the troops, and the town and shipping were surrendered with a vast treasure. In another part of the world, the Spanish possessions in the island of Luzon were captured. We were triumphant everywhere, and peace was concluded at Paris in February 1763; but many of the possessions which we had won were surrendered by our Ministers to their former possessors, though France finally lost Canada, Nova Scotia, and Cape Breton.

But now we had to encounter troubles in other quarters, arising from the growing dissatisfaction of our American colonists. The ill-feeling spread; and, in 1775, Sir Peter Parker left Portsmouth to

co-operate with the land forces in putting down the rebellion. Its course cannot be related in this place, but we have to deal with the great naval events which arose out of it, when the French recognised the independence of the United States and sent out a fleet to aid the rebellion against our authority. The French Admiral was the Comte d'Estaing, who had with him a fleet of twelve ships of the line and four frigates. Howe was in inferior strength, but he was reinforced by Admiral Byron, and an inconclusive action took place off Rhode Island in 1778. The hostilities were then transferred to the West Indies, where Admiral Barrington captured St Lucia. There was fighting also on this side of the Atlantic, where Keppel was engaged with d'Orvillers, off Brest, in July 1778; but the action was indecisive, mainly owing to Sir Hugh Palliser, who ignored Keppel's signals to continue the action, and a long controversy ensued. In the following year the Spaniards also mustered their forces against us, with the object of recapturing Gibraltar, which was relieved in 1780 by Rodney, who defeated De Langara off Cape St Vincent, after a valiant fight, in which only two of the enemy's ships escaped.

We must now return to the West Indies, where

Byron joined Barrington. D'Estaing was unwilling to bring on a general action, although he was in superior force; but his fleet was severely damaged in the fight off Granada, in July 1779. The situation in the West Indies became serious, and Rodney was despatched, to find Sir Hyde Parker blockaded at St Lucia by De Guichen, who had relieved D'Estaing. But De Guichen, like his predecessor, did not at first care to risk an action. However, with twenty-three ships of the line and three frigates, he was sighted off the Pearl Rock, and, on the 17th April 1780, the great opportunity seemed to have come to Rodney. De Guichen had left Martinique with a convoy for San Domingo. Rodney learned of his departure. The two fleets were in sight of one another, to the leeward of Martinique, on the 16th April, and on the next morning were twelve to fifteen miles apart, on nearly parallel courses. Rodney's intention was to attack the enemy's rear with his whole force, and he pursued this purpose throughout the day. It was a fine tactical inspiration, showing that this great seaman had broken away entirely from the old formalism of the rigid line of battle, in which ship was disposed against ship, as illustrated in the melancholy history of the indecisive

fighting associated with the names of Mathews, Byng, Keppel, and some others. Hawke had shown the spirit of initiative, and Boscawen had not been untouched by it; but its full significance was felt by Rodney, and by Hood, Howe, Duncan, and above all by Nelson. Rodney, in fact, made it his rule to bring his whole force against part of the enemy's, and never to bring ship against ship, when he could act otherwise.

To increase his advantage, Rodney ordered his vessels to close to one cable, and he said he was very attentive to watch every opportunity of attacking the French with advantage, for De Guichen was an experienced and wary seaman. Manœuvring continued for some hours, and at length Rodney considered that the moment had come. Both fleets were then heading in the same direction, and Rodney so disposed his own as to oppose twenty sail of the line to the rearmost fifteen of the enemy. He then made a general signal for the vessels to steer for those ships of the enemy which it would be their lot to engage, notwithstanding that the signal for line ahead would be kept flying. Unfortunately, Captain Carkett, in the *Stirling Castle*, frustrated Rodney's fine tactical purpose, considering that the signal for bearing

down upon the enemy's rear was annulled by the existing situation, in which, as leading ship, he said it became his duty under the old rules to engage the leading ship of the French fleet. The paralysis of the old Fighting Instructions had seized him. It is not necessary to enter into the details of the signals, but it must be observed that some other captains followed Carkett's example, the result being that the van left the centre to itself and wrecked the concentration on the enemy's rear. In short, with inexpressible pain, Rodney saw his flag not supported, but he endeavoured to make up for the disobedience of his captains by his own undaunted courage and skill; and going straight for the French centre, followed by eight other vessels, he engaged three of the enemy, single-handed, throwing the line into confusion, and soon found himself in action with De Guichen and two others. His ship was battered and covered with dead and wounded, and her foremast gone; but De Guichen had had enough, and attempted to reach Fort Royal, but Rodney drove him off to Guadaloupe, while he himself proceeded to St Lucia to refit.

The truth is that Rodney was ahead of his time, and that men like Carkett, and also like Graves,

who had fumbled in the action off the Chesapeake, were blinded by the old rules, and were unable to understand the new spirit. Yet in this famous action De Guichen had divined Rodney's intention, declaring that it would cost him six or seven ships at the least, if carried out; and after the action he sent word to the British Admiral, that, if the signals of the latter had been obeyed, he would himself have been Rodney's prisoner. But Rodney, who had been exasperated by failure, now taught his captains by precept and exercise; and when he engaged De Grasse, who had succeeded De Guichen, off Martinique, on the 12th April 1782, the lesson had been learned. The French had been heavily reinforced, and all turned upon the retention of Jamaica. It is no exaggeration to say that the fate of the British dominion in that part of the world was in Rodney's hands. De Grasse put to sea from Fort Royal with thirty-five ships of the line and two 50-gun ships; while Rodney, who had been joined by Samuel Hood at St Lucia, had thirty-six of the line, so that the forces were nearly equal, and for several days the manœuvring for the advantage of position went on. De Grasse's purpose was to protect a large convoy from Martinique to Hayti, and he was closely followed

when he left his port on 8th April. There were several skirmishes on the next morning, and the pursuit was maintained during the following night and the next two days.

On the morning of the great day the French 74-gun ship *Zélé* was injured in collision with De Grasse's flagship, the *Ville de Paris*, and De Grasse had ordered her into Guadaloupe for repairs. Rodney, seeing what had happened, signalled to Hood to chase her, and De Grasse ran down to her support, his ships forming an irregular line of battle. Such was the course of the two squadrons that the British ships were leading down diagonally towards the course followed by the French, who, being ahead of us, got eight ships clear, while the leading British vessel came down when the ninth ship was near a point at which the two lines would have intersected. But the leading British vessel, followed by the others, put up her helm and ran along towards the rear of the French line. Fortune then favoured us by a change of wind, and enabled our fleet to stand in towards the enemy's line. Rodney's flagship, the *Formidable*, 90, bore up, and passed through the line just astern of the *Glorieux*, 74, which was the fourth ship astern of the *Ville de Paris*, and nineteenth from the French van. He

was followed by the five ships astern of him; while the *Bedford*, 74, broke through the French line astern of the *César* and *Hector*, twelve British vessels following in her wake, Hood being in the *Barfleur*, 90. By these movements, the *Glorieux*, *César*, and *Hector* were completely overpowered by tremendous broadsides, while De Grasse was separated with six of his vessels from his van and rear, and the British main body was to windward.

It was a famous victory, but it was incomplete, and no proper advantage was taken of the success that had been attained. Rodney had been seriously ill, and it may perhaps account in part for his failure; but Hood, in the *Barfleur*, who was curbed by his superior's immediate presence, did his utmost by engaging the *Ville de Paris*, assisted by other ships, and the great prize struck to him. Rodney earned his peerage; but it is sometimes urged that his victory was largely gained by accident, and a great controversy arose out of his partial failure. Hood had to stand by and witness it, while perhaps he himself could have made a masterpiece of it. There were certainly some captains who felt strongly upon this matter, and amongst them Cornwallis, in the *Canada*—afterwards the famous admiral who blockaded the French at Brest, 1803–5, and who,

if Ganteaume had come out, might have won the victory which would have taken the place of Trafalgar. Cornwallis has left a ballad, in which his own feelings are expressed, and some halting but expressive lines may be quoted—

"The French fleet were beaten and put to the rout,
And the English with copper bottoms look'd on the fun.
To larboard a sweep did Hood's squadron make,
And the *Cæsar* and *Ardentu* did both of them take.
Our Chief, he lay quiet, with good ships around him,
Some willing to move, but the devil confound him!
He made no signal to chase, nor would let others go—
Those who were willing to follow the foe."

Hood had remonstrated with the admiral himself, and, after the action, was at his own request detached to pursue the French; but it was too late, and it is impossible to deny that the great Rodney had failed at the critical moment. He had replied to Hood, who lamented the incompleteness of the action, "Come, we have done very handsomely as it is." He had held his fleet in readiness, pursued with promptness, and in the general conduct of the action, though doubtless open to criticism, showed himself to be the same alert, accomplished, and distinguished officer which he had already proved himself to be. The French had lost, including the crews of four ships taken by Hood a week later, at

least, 15,000 men, of whom nearly half were killed, wounded, or drowned. There were over a thousand casualties in the *Ville de Paris* and the *César* alone, while the British loss was comparatively small. It is very pleasing to note that there had been most courteous relations between the admirals on both sides; and after the action, De Grasse was Rodney's guest on board the *Formidable*, bearing his reverse with equanimity, and conscious that he had done his duty.

Little space is now left to deal further with this important period of naval history; but it must be noted that, before this great action, Captain Horatio Nelson, of whom much has yet to be said, had been distinguishing himself in the San Juan River, at the entrance of Lake Nicaragua. Holland had joined with our adversaries, and we were then at war with three naval powers and with our American colonists. Gibraltar was relieved again, in 1781, by a squadron under command of Admiral Darby; and in the same year Sir Hyde Parker defeated the Dutch off the Dogger Bank. On the American continent things had not gone well with us; and the superior sea power of the French, in 1781, had compelled Cornwallis to surrender at York Town. The great defence of Gibraltar was continued, and for a third

time the place was relieved by the arrival of Lord Howe. There was also much fighting in the East Indies between Sir Edward Hughes and that famous French seaman, the Bailli de Suffren. Not less than five actions were fought, and each time the adversaries drew off; but they were preparing for the sixth conflict when news reached them of the preliminaries of peace. The Treaty of Versailles restored peace with France, Spain, and Holland, gave us most of our West Indian possessions, deprived us finally of the island of Minorca, and acknowledged the existence of the new and separate nation on the other side of the Atlantic.

This chapter has surveyed a great and important period of naval history. As was said at the beginning, it saw the creation of the great Navy which afterwards, perfected in the hands of men like St Vincent and Nelson, gave us the final triumph of Trafalgar; while Lestock, Byng, and others, who possessed the same spirit, were representative of the older Navy and of a time in which the spirit of the new Navy tried long in vain to break through the bondage. Hawke and his comrades expressed the new spirit; and in Rodney, Hood, and many of those who were engaged with them, we have the men who were giving form and character to naval

principles, which were perfected in the hands of their successors, and became the informing principle of the later admirals, and finally of Nelson himself.

Space must be found for some few particulars of the material aspect of the Navy in the important period covered by this chapter. After the Peace of Utrecht there was for some years no increase in the strength of the Navy, although a tendency was manifested to build bigger ships; but after the death of George I., in 1727, the fleet expanded, though not by an increase of first and second rates, but of the third, fifth, and sixth rates. In 1714 we had 131 ships of the line, of 50 guns and upwards; in 1727, 124; in 1752, 132; and in 1760, 155. But the real increase was in the third and fourth rates. It may be noted, however, that after 1756 the 50-gun ships were not ordinarily counted as of the line of battle. The ships were larger, built upon better lines, and were greatly increased in sea-keeping qualities. During the period of the Seven Years' War, the frigate class was introduced; and, demonstrating its value, was built in increasing numbers later on. Frigates mounting 28 guns began to be built about 1748, but they had no larger gun than the nine-pounder. Twelve-pounder 32-gun frigates also came into the fleet, and growing experience

added to their value. Finally, it may be noted that, at the end of the war in 1762, we had 141 sail of the line, including fourth rates of 60 guns; in 1776, 131; in 1783, 174; and in 1792, before the outbreak of the great war, 129, which number included 47 ships calling for repair; while the smaller classes, including sloops, bombs, and fireships, brought up the total number, in 1762, to 365; in 1775, to 270; in 1783, to 468; and 1792, to 330; besides 18 building or ordered.

CHAPTER V

THE NAVY IN THE WAR OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

THIS survey has now brought us to the threshold of the greatest period in all our naval history—to the age of Howe and Hood, of Jervis and Nelson—to the brilliant achievements of the glorious First of June, of Cape St Vincent, of the Nile, and of Trafalgar. All through the century, the Navy had been progressing towards its splendid zenith, perfecting its ships, strengthening its administration, and, above all, producing the finest body of officers that the world had ever known. Pitt, the great peace minister, had refused to believe in the possibility of war. He had not realised the terrific energy or the volcanic force, nor had he foreseen the fiery torrent of the French Revolution. He had reduced the vote for the Navy, and said that there never was a time in the history of this country when we might more reasonably expect

fifteen years of peace, at a time when we were on the very brink of twenty years of war. Many French armies were sent into the field, the tide flowed over the Low Countries, Antwerp was seized, the Scheldt was declared open, and the exclusive use of navigable rivers was denounced as contrary to the rights of man. Thus hands were laid upon things that we could by no means surrender to a strong and aggressive power; for if there is one feature more permanent than another in all our naval and military policy, it has been to maintain neutral those countries through which the Scheldt, the Moselle, the Meuse, and the Rhine pass under various names to the sea, thus opening unrivalled opportunities to a power proposing to dispute with us our naval supremacy.

What Pitt had not foreseen, the Navy had known, and for the struggle was prepared. When the war broke out, we had one hundred and fifteen sail of the line to seventy-six of the French, and these mounted many more guns, and had greater broadside weight. At home and in the Channel we had a great commissioned force, including twenty-five sail of the line; and in serviceable condition were fifty-nine others, besides twelve building, and, in addition, many 50-gun ships,

frigates, and smaller craft. But our advantage was not really in material things, but in great and highly skilled officers, such as Howe, Peter Parker, Hughes, Barrington, Graves, Sir Samuel Hood, (afterwards Lord Hood), and his brother Sir Alexander (afterwards Lord Bridport), Sir Richard King, Sir John Jervis (the future Lord St Vincent), Nelson, Adam Duncan (the future Earl of Camperdown), Sir Hyde Parker, William Cornwallis, and many more, besides younger officers who were to give proof of unexampled qualities during the coming years of war.

Howe, the great tactician, the silent organiser, the able administrator, the "sailors' friend," was then in the fulness of his experience as a strong man of 67. He stood conspicuously at the head of the Navy; and his rivals in renown, Keppel and Rodney, had gone to their rest. He had commanded the fleet at Sandy Hook and Rhode Island in 1778, perhaps his highest title to fame; and he had relieved Gibraltar in 1782, described by a French historian as one of the finest operations of war. Thus, no man but Howe could be chosen to command the Channel fleet in 1793. Hood was his senior in years, having been born two years before him, and, like Howe, he had a high reputa-

tion, though he had exercised no great and independent command for a considerable period. He had been engaged with De Grasse in the West Indies, and was with Rodney in the famous action of the 12th April 1782, where he had shown more vigour than his chief, and had captured the French admiral. To him was given the command in the Mediterranean, with all its tremendous significance in the days that followed. Jervis, the great St Vincent, was younger than either Howe or Hood, being in full vigour at 58, strong in his characteristics as a disciplinarian, with self-reliance, self-control, and stern determination; the man who made an illustrious reputation as the commander of great fleets and the organiser of victories. He had been with Howe at the relief of Gibraltar in 1782, and in the *Foudroyant* had captured the French 74 *Pégase* in the same year. To him came, in the war of the French Revolution, the command in the Mediterranean, when Hotham, who had succeeded Hood, was recalled. Nelson was the youngest of this brilliant band, being a captain of thirty-three, reaching the most important period of his life when he commissioned the *Agamemnon*, in 1793, in the imminence of the war. He was one of the most popular captains in the whole

Navy, winning the love of his officers, not by permitting neglect, but by inspiring them with his own determination; and he was popular with the men, not by tolerating irregularities, but by sustained attention to their comforts and their rights. He wrote of his ship: "I not only like the ship, but think I am well appointed in officers, and we are manned exceedingly well. . . . With a good ship and ship's company, we can come to no harm."

Not all the captains were like Nelson; and the state of the fleet at the outbreak of the war was not in all ways satisfactory, because the spirit was growing which four years later was to break out in the mutiny in Jervis's fleet off Cadiz, at the Nore, and at Spithead, while the ferment of the United Irishmen was beginning to work in the fleet. But these mutinies, except those arising from the latter spirit, sprang mostly from Jack's rational prejudice in favour of decent food, fair treatment, and proper pay. The French were in a far worse state, for the Revolution had struck at the root of discipline; the old officers had been mostly expelled, some of them executed, and men installed in their place whose *civisme* was undoubted, though, as Villaret-Joyeuse had to remind the National Assembly, patriotism alone could not handle a ship.

When war was declared, Howe with fifteen sail of the line set out to watch the growing fleet of Morard de Galles, then gathering in the French ports; while Hood arrived off Toulon, with some twenty-two sail of the line, in July, to hold fast the great fleet which the French were preparing there. The place was surrendered to the English, with the object of declaring for the monarchy in France, and troops were sent from Naples. Preparations were made for defence; but Toulon is commanded by heights on every side, and the French brought up their forces with guns, a young artillery officer, named Napoleon Bonaparte, being with the troops. Attacks were made upon the British defences, guns brought up, and it was at last decided by Hood to abandon the place. A magnificent French fleet was in the harbour; but, in the tumult that occurred, Hood could neither carry it off nor effectually destroy it. The tale of the abandonment of Toulon cannot be told here, but it was followed by great bloodshed, and many of those who remained in the place perished. Nelson had no part in these operations, but he displayed his great qualities in the capture of Bastia and Calvi. He was eager to prove that sailors could accomplish what the soldiers feared

to attempt at these places, and pushed on, to seize Bastia, with great and fiery energy impelling every officer and man to the utmost exertions. It was the same at Calvi, where a blast of sand, driven by a cannon ball, cost him his right eye. He described himself as a reed among the oaks, having "all the diseases there are; but there is not enough in my frame for them to fasten on."

But now let us turn from Toulon and Corsica to the Channel, where Howe was to secure the great triumph which will ever be associated with his name. He had been nourishing and preparing his fleet, and his opportunity came at the end of May, culminating on the Glorious First of June, 1794. In the two days' fighting, ending on the 31st May, and in the long chase, he had continually attacked the rear of the enemy's line, as the chance offered; and by his judicious movements the French had lost four ships from their line, while another had all her spars shot away, and had to be towed out of action. On the other hand, the British had lost one 74, disabled, which returned to port. An end came to the manœuvring on the 1st of June, and the great action of that immortal day was in the simple old sledge-hammer fashion adopted by the British Navy, every ship going down to engage a

particular French ship. Howe had concentrated his attack during the chase on a few ships, and now his superiority justified his action. When that Sunday morning broke, Collingwood, in the *Barfleur*, said, "Our wives are now about going to church, but we will ring about these Frenchmen's ears a peal which will drown their bells"; and so it was done. Silently the ships drove onward, curling white foam from their bows, with their long rows of guns charged and ready to fire, and every officer and man waiting at his post. As Captain Mahan says, "Upon the high poops, where floated the standard of either nation, gathered round each chief the little knot of officers through whom commands were issued and reports received; the nerves along which thrilled the impulses of the great organism, from its head, the admiral, through every member to the lowest decks, nearly awash, where, as farthest from the captain's own oversight, the senior lieutenants controlled the action of the ship's heaviest batteries." Howe was on board the *Queen Charlotte*, half worn out with his exertions, sometimes seated in an arm-chair, but displaying an animation which some were surprised at in a man of sixty-eight. "He seemed to contemplate the result as one of unbounded satisfaction." Howe instructed his officers to lay

LORD HOWE'S ACTION WITH THE FRENCH OFF USHANT

June 1st, 1794

the *Queen Charlotte* alongside the French flagship, after going through the French line; and the ship pushed close under the stern of her adversary, actually grazing her ensign staff, and raking her from stem to stern with a withering fire, beneath which fell three hundred men. The battle then raged furiously all along the line, in a great series of duels; but the exultant note was in the hearts of the British, while the gallant French were fighting as Frenchmen can; and the tremendous struggle between the *Brunswick* and the *Vengeur* will ever live in our naval annals. For three hours the ships fought yard-arm to yard-arm, and the *Vengeur* at last was in a sinking condition. Many boats were sent to help her, but she went down with a great many on board, crying out as they sank, "Vive la République!" Seven French ships were captured, if the *Vengeur* be counted, and five escaped, dismasted and damaged. If Howe had been a younger man, they might perhaps have been captured, but he was worn out; and Lieutenant Codrington wrote, "Indeed, I saved him from a tumble; he was so weak from a roll of the ship, he was nearly falling into the waist. 'Why, you hold me up as if I were a child!' he said good-humouredly."

The years that followed, 1795 and 1796, were

not particularly eventful, though the Dutch and Spaniards threw in their lot with the French. Cornwallis, chased by a vastly superior fleet of the French, made the famous retreat from which he gained almost as much credit as if it had been a victory. Writing of his comrades, he said, "Could prudence have allowed me to let loose their valour on the enemy, I hardly know what might not have been accomplished by such men." The French ships were more speedy than ours; and Cornwallis, in the *Royal Sovereign*, had to fall back to protect the *Mars*; but by the clever ruse of sending a frigate to signal to an imaginary fleet, the French were led to think that superior forces were coming down for his support, and so they retired. But the fleet which the French thought they saw, they actually did see some days later. It was that of Lord Bridport, who had succeeded Howe, and had with him fourteen sail of the line. The French were much inferior; and, after being chased for four days, were brought to action off Lorient, 23rd June 1795. But Bridport, having captured three ships and seriously damaged another, signalled his ships to discontinue the action, thus losing a great opportunity, for the French themselves expected their whole fleet to be destroyed.

There was an inconclusive action in the Mediterranean also, where, in March, with fifteen ships of the line, Hotham engaged the French who had left Toulon with the object of retaking Corsica. Nelson, in the *Agamemnon*, 64, following astern of the *Ça Ira*, 80, which had lost her two top masts, worked "tack and half tack" astern of her at the range of about one hundred yards for about two hours, raking her with alternate broadsides, until he was recalled. Hotham did not press his advantage, and Nelson was profoundly discontented and indignant. He said, "Had we taken ten sail, and allowed the eleventh to escape when it was possible to have got at her, I could never have called it well done." The opportunity came again later, off Hyères, on the 13th July of the same year; but again Hotham did not use his advantage, hauling off because of the alleged danger of proximity to the land. Nelson was contemptuous of his timidity, and bitterly incensed, and he deplored that Lord Hood was no longer with them. Nelson was now the leading spirit in the Mediterranean, going everywhere, doing everything, and inspiring everyone. In the next year Jervis came out to succeed Hotham; but the French were gaining ground round the Mediterranean, and the Spaniards had joined forces with them, so that we

could no longer hold either Corsica or Elba. The result was that, in December 1796, we abandoned the Mediterranean, and the ships of the line were withdrawn to Gibraltar. Yet, if Hotham had destroyed the French fleet in the action off Hyères on the 13th July, as Nelson thought it might have been destroyed, in the manner he afterwards adopted with such triumphant success at the Nile, the history of that time would have been written very differently.

These various events had had a very depressing effect at home in England, and people no longer looked for a victory every morning. But the brilliant engagement of St Valentine's Day, 1797, off Cape St Vincent, once more showed the quality of British seamen. The Spanish fleet was on its way northward, with the intention of joining the French at Brest, and Jervis had with him only fifteen sail of the line; but these were in a high state of discipline, and amongst them was the *Captain*, in which Nelson was flying his broad pennant as commodore. As Jervis paced the quarter-deck of the *Victory*, he was heard to mutter, "A victory is very essential to England at this moment." At the time the Spanish fleet was across his line of advance, and he so directed his

course as to steer for a gap between two of the divisions, in order to cut off several of their ships to leeward. The Spaniards were then endeavouring to reach Cadiz; and Jervis signalled to his ships to tack in succession as each passed through the line, in order to follow up the main body. This signal to tack in succession in the wake of the *Culloden* was an error of judgment, because it gave the Spaniards the opportunity of getting ahead, with the possibility of escaping. It was Nelson's unerring eye that saw the great opportunity; and observing that the manœuvre ordered would prevent the *Captain* getting into action, and would enable the Spaniards to run to leeward and join their other division, without a moment's hesitation he boldly disobeyed the order, wore out of the line, and went straight down to meet the Spanish admiral in the *Santisima Trinidad*, which was the biggest ship then afloat. Troubridge, in the *Culloden*, which had been injured in collision, came up to support Nelson, as did Collingwood, in the *Excellent*, and a terrific engagement ensued. The *Captain* had been subjected to very heavy fire, and had suffered severely; but Nelson had compelled the Spanish admiral and the ships with him to haul to the wind again, thus delaying their movement, and

enabling the other ships to come up. Two of the Spanish ships struck, and were taken possession of. From his engagement with the *Santisima Trinidad* and others, Nelson proceeded to engage closely the *San Nicolas*, of 84 guns; while Collingwood, in the *Excellent*, poured a tremendous broadside into the big Spaniard at pistol-shot range, causing the *San Nicolas* to fall foul of the *San Josef*, 112. The *Captain* was by this time on the starboard quarter of the *San Nicolas*, her spritsail yard hooked in the mizzen rigging of the big Spaniard. Now came the opportunity of boarding; and Berry, Nelson's first lieutenant, just promoted and serving as a volunteer, sprang into the mizzen chains of the *San Nicolas*, followed by Lieutenant Pierson of the 69th Regiment, and the upper quarter gallery window was dashed in and Nelson and others jumped through. The Spaniards had been shattered by fire, their resistance was nominal, and Berry hauled down the Spanish colours, while the officers gave up their swords. Nelson then called for more men, and, assisted by Berry, boarded the *San Josef* by getting into her mizzen chains; and the Spaniards there also surrendered, Nelson on the quarter-deck receiving the sword of the officers, which he says, "As I received

I gave to William Fierney, one of my bargemen, who put them under his arm with the greatest *sang froid.*" It was a famous victory, whose completeness was due chiefly to Nelson's sublime disobedience, and a great weight it took from the country. When Nelson went on board the *Victory*, Jervis received him on the quarter-deck, embraced him, and said he could not thank him sufficiently. Nelson's boarding of the *San Josef* from the *San Nicolas* became known as his "patent bridge for boarding first-rates." But the great seaman did not receive the reward he deserved for his brilliant services, nor did he seek honours that some would have coveted. Promotion to the rank of rear-admiral came to him, not as a recompense, but in the ordinary course of service.

The Admiral relaxed no effort after the battle, and was continually active, displaying his tremendous energy and inspiring and encouraging others. He conceived the possibility of injuring the Spaniards by an attack on Teneriffe, where a landing was attempted; but, as Nelson was going on shore, he was struck on the right elbow by a grapeshot, falling back into the arms of his stepson, Josiah Nisbet, lieutenant of the *Theseus*, and his shattered arm had to be amputated. The attack was a failure;

but Nelson was not daunted, and was writing to St Vincent with his left hand sixty hours after the operation. He suffered intense agony from the wound later on, and was lying ill when he heard of the great victory of Camperdown, which Duncan had secured over the Dutch admiral, De Winter, the 11th October 1797. It was a signal and important success, in which both sides suffered heavily, and the credit of Great Britain was heightened still more by the destruction of the Dutch fleet which had been a menace for many a long year. This was a great fighting year, as was that which followed; for again the French had taken up the project of invasion, and Humbert had landed in Killala Bay, while another French expedition was brought to action by Sir John Borlase Warren, and completely defeated, all attempts to invade Ireland in force coming to an end.

But the great scene to which the eyes of Englishmen were turned was the Mediterranean, where Nelson was to secure the glorious triumph of the Nile. The French were preparing huge armaments at Toulon, but the object was not known; and St Vincent, then off Cadiz, sent Nelson to discover what was in progress, with instructions not to overlook the Spanish ships at Cartagena, nor to let the

French get between him and Gibraltar. He discovered fifteen sail of the line ready for sea at Toulon, but, by ill fortune, on the 18th May it came on to blow. His ship, the *Vanguard*, was dismasted, and taken in tow by the *Alexander*, and she proceeded with the *Orion* to an anchorage at the southern end of Sardinia, while the frigates parted company, thinking Nelson would be compelled to return to Gibraltar. But, by extraordinary exertions, the *Vanguard* was refitted and was soon off Toulon again, to find the French had flown. Troubridge, with a squadron of ten 74-gun ships and a 50-gun ship, had been despatched to reinforce Nelson, who was "to take, burn, sink, or destroy" the Toulon fleet wherever he might find it. It might proceed to Naples or to Sicily, to Portugal or to Ireland; but the fine intuition of Nelson told him that it was in fact going to Egypt. On the 20th June he learnt that the French had taken Malta, and afterwards that they had left that island. He was now more than ever convinced of the object, and made the utmost endeavours to obtain information and to secure supplies for his ships. His idea was that the French had the further object of reaching India; and therefore he made all sail for Alexandria, hoping to encounter the fleet on the way. But at

Alexandria he could learn no tidings of his adversaries, and, in search of them, proceeded along the coast of Syria and Caramania, his frail frame filled with a burning desire to get at his adversary. His ships, however, were much distressed for want of water and supplies; and therefore, relying on an order he had received from Acton, he made straight for Syracuse, where he anchored on the 19th July, and sent boats in for water, not regarding the governor's protest. But the governor had really no choice but to supply the necessaries of the squadron, which was thus enabled to leave again on the 25th July; and once more Nelson shaped his course for Alexandria. It was on the 1st August that the French were sighted, thirteen sail of the line and four large frigates, anchored close inshore in Aboukir Bay.

The great search had been continued for months; and Nelson, eating out his heart for want of frigates and necessary supplies, at last found the opportunity he had sought so long and so unwaveringly. He had a brilliant band of officers with him: Foley in the *Goliath*, Samuel Hood in the *Zealous*, Ben Hallowell in the *Swiftsure*, Ball in the *Alexander*, Troubridge in the *Culloden*, Berry in his own flagship the *Vanguard*, Saumarez in the *Orion*, Darby

in the *Bellerophon*, Louis in the *Minotaur*, Peyton in the *Defence*, Gould in the *Audacious*, Westcott in the *Majestic*, Miller in the *Theseus*, and Thompson in the *Leander*. This was the famous "band of brothers" whom Nelson had inspired with his own fire and high purpose, and to whom, during the chase, he had made known all his plans and designs. Bold was the seamanship of that immortal day. As the leading ships drew near to the French, fire was opened upon them, but it was not returned; and slowly they stood on, until the *Goliath*, crossing the bows of the *Guerrier*, hardly clearing her jib-boom, poured into her a tremendous broadside. She let go her stern anchor between the French ship and the shore, but her way carried her on until she came abreast of the *Conquérant*, while the *Zealous* followed her, pouring another raking broadside into the unfortunate *Guerrier*. Then the *Orion*, passing inshore both of the *Zealous* and the *Goliath*, fouled the *Sérieuse*, which drifted on the beach, sinking, and the *Orion* let go her anchor abreast of the *Peuple Souverain*. The *Theseus* followed, and, as she passed round the *Guerrier*, fired a broadside which brought down the latter's masts; and then passing on, anchored abreast of the *Spartiate*, followed by the *Audacious*, which poured a terrific fire into the

ships as she went by. In this way, five ships passed inside the French line, gathering about its headmost ships, and a furious conflict went on—the guns spitting flame, the air rent with the sound of masts and yards falling, and men fighting gallantly till they fell. Nelson's own ship, the *Vanguard*, anchored outside and abreast of the *Spartiate*; and the *Minotaur* and *Defence*, as well as the *Bellerophon*, all followed, dropping their anchors alongside the Frenchmen. There was great loss in some of our ships. Soon the *Swiftsure* and *Alexander* came into action, supporting the *Bellerophon*, against the French flagship *Orient*; but by a great misfortune the *Culloden* grounded upon a shoal as she passed round into the bay, and could not take part. The five ships at the head of the French line, which had suffered so much, as the British ships raked them when they passed between them and the shore, were completely overpowered; and now the *Orient* caught fire, and was brought under tremendous cannonade from the *Swiftsure* and *Alexander*. Half an hour later she blew up with a tremendous explosion, and the victory was complete. Only the *Guillaume Tell* and the *Généreux*, with the frigates *Justice* and *Diane*, escaped. The heroic tale of war has no record of victory so great

BATTLE OF THE NILE

August 1st, 1798

and complete; but Nelson regretted that the two ships of the line had been able to get away. It had been impossible to prevent their escape, though Captain Hood, in the *Zealous*, had made a most gallant attempt to stop them. To Nelson's immense delight, they were afterwards captured. The battle had been fought exactly as he had planned, and was indeed a famous victory. The French had suffered terribly, both in ships, officers, and men; and gallant but unfortunate Admiral Brueys, against whom so many charges of mismanagement were laid, though Napoleon was really to blame, was terribly wounded, and died.

Wild enthusiasm greeted the news of the victory in England, and never was any seaman raised to such a pinnacle as that which had been attained by the victor of the Nile. He was gazetted a peer, thanked by the Houses of Parliament, and voted a pension of £2000 per annum. From all his old friends and associates came congratulations; and when he arrived in Naples bay in the *Vanguard*, there were outbursts of satisfaction and joy that were another reward for Nelson; and Lady Hamilton hailed him as Deliverer and Preserver of the throne of Naples. It is scarcely possible to describe the exultation which was expressed wherever English-

men heard of the victory. Nelson did not relax his endeavours. He took Leghorn, established a blockade of Malta, exerted himself to paralyse the movements of the French in Italy, and, as the result of his successes, Minorca fell into our hands.

Our sea power was now well established, both in the Mediterranean and in our waters nearer home; and the two years that followed the victory were not distinguished by any notable naval actions, although there was a great deal of fighting between individual vessels, and brilliant qualities were displayed by captains and younger officers. Sir Sidney Smith made his great defence of Acre, and Bonaparte was thwarted, with the loss of many guns, by the successful defence offered by this excellent naval officer.

The last great action to be spoken of in this chapter, which terminates with the Peace of Amiens, is the battle of Copenhagen, the 2nd April 1801. This arose out of the resistance of the Armed Neutrality of the North to the right of search. Everyone expected that the command of the fleet would be given to Nelson; but Sir Hyde Parker was appointed instead, with Nelson as his second in command, Nelson's flag being in the *St George* and afterwards in the *Elephant*.

Parker and Nelson were men of a different mould: the one cautious, though brave; and the other all for audacity. Parker's caution led to indecision when he saw the formidable defences of Copenhagen, frowning over the long line of ships, hulks, and floating batteries, moored just off the shoal-water, and the huge Trekroner fort and several ships of the line protecting the mouth of the harbour. Sandbanks, shoals, and currents rendered the navigation perilous, but Nelson was not the man to shrink from risks. On the next morning, Parker, like other men not knowing their own minds, summoned a council of war. The task, before the fleet, was confided to Nelson, with twelve sail of the line and all the frigates and sloops. All night long, in an open boat, on the 30th March, was Nelson employed in sounding with his own hands. The enterprise was more difficult even than the Nile, there being no chance of getting between the Dutch ships and the shore, and there was nothing for it but to range opposite to the enemy by running between them and the shoal of the Middle Ground. On the morning of the 2nd April the movement began; but at the very outset misfortunes occurred. The *Edgar* weathered the shoal; but the *Agamemnon*, *Bellona*, and *Russell*

grounded on the sand, and never got into action at all. Nelson, however, was undismayed; and leading into the Channel, in the *Elephant*, followed by the other ships, he was able at last to get at his enemy, making the huge *Dannebrog*, flagship of the Danes, the particular object of his own attack. For three hours a tremendous cannonade went on, and it seemed as if all would be destroyed. Parker, meanwhile, anticipating disaster, and knowing the fate of the ships that had grounded, signalled to Nelson to discontinue the action. The signal was really permissive; but then occurred the celebrated episode of the "blind eye." Nelson would not see it, and said he had a right to be blind sometimes. The action then became still more furious, but at length the Danish fire began to slacken. Two ships struck, and presently the *Dannebrog*, all in flames, broke from her moorings and drifted away, to blow up with a terrific explosion. Danes from the shore, however, continued to pour into the surrounding vessels, and at one time Nelson thought of destroying them with fireships. Then it was that he wrote the celebrated letter to the Crown Prince of Denmark, all carefully penned and sealed, which led to negotiations, and brought the tremendous struggle to an end. Fourteen of

the Danish ships were taken or destroyed; but our gallant adversaries received the prizes from us again, and an armistice was arranged, which was followed by peace.

Nelson came home after these tremendous events, and was employed in work upon the coast and against the Boulogne flotilla. The war was not yet at an end; and Saumarez defeated brave Linois, off Gibraltar, on 12th July 1801. But exhaustion and the need for respite had told in different degree upon both powers, and we were genuinely glad of peace. Therefore, the Treaty of Amiens was signed, bringing about what was really an armistice, and for a time hostilities came to an end. Never had the British Navy stood higher than in this year of triumph, never was its courage greater, and, we may add, never was it so ready to enter upon operations again.

CHAPTER VI

THE NAVY OF THE NAPOLEONIC ERA

When Nelson seconded the address to the throne in the House of Lords on the 23rd November 1802, he declared that the war had not exhausted our resources. This was most true, for not only was the Mediterranean fleet kept practically on a war footing during the peace, but our dockyards and establishments at home were in a state of efficiency, and we had in 1803 one hundred and eleven sail of the line, and large numbers of fourth, fifth, and sixth rates, rapidly increased during the years that followed. The spirit of the nation ran high; there was no disposition to restrict expenditure upon the Navy, and the Navy itself had never been in a more efficient condition. It had passed through the great crisis of the mutinies of Spithead and the Nore, but had weathered the storm, and was almost purged of its discontent. The scandals in the dockyards were known; and though they were not

cured altogether even by the vigilant hand of St Vincent, they had lost their practical dangers, as was demonstrated by the triumphant success of their work during the whole subsequent period of hostilities. But the real efficiency of the Navy was in the quality of its officers and men. The glory of enterprise went hand-in-hand with the spirit of duty throughout the fleet, and the sacred flame that burned in the breast of Nelson was not his alone. There was no stint of self in the campaign of Trafalgar, nor any half measures in admirals, captains, junior officers, or men. "I go because it is right, and I will serve the country faithfully," wrote Nelson a little later; and half a victory, he said, would but half content him. It was the vigorous spirit of the whole nation. "You may rely that if it is within the power of man to get at them, it shall be done." There were admirals like Cornwallis and Keith maintaining the best traditions of the service; captains like Hardy, Berry, and Blackwood, like Keats, Brisbane, and Durham; and young officers, whose qualities have never been excelled. The vigilance and exhaustless endurance of those who conducted the great blockades, the insatiable desire to get at the enemy in action, the courage of the officers and men who took part in

the cutting-out expeditions, the eagerness with which they competed for the honour of going on a perilous projected errand of destruction into the very jaws of the enemy in the harbour of Brest, all showed the matchless qualities of the seamen of Nelson's day.

That war was inevitable, even when the Peace of Amiens was signed, was evident to many thinking men. The pretensions of Bonaparte in the Mediterranean and Egypt, the ambitions which impelled him towards India, the diplomatic triumph which he had secured in the Treaty, leaving Elba and Piedmont annexed to the French dominions, the states of Parma occupied, the presidency of the Italian Republic in Bonaparte's hands, Holland a vassal, Germany partitioned, Austria crushed and broken, Switzerland compelled to submit to mediation and French protection, and Louisiana wrung from the hand of Spain—all these pointed, beyond doubt, to the greater dangers of the future. Bourrienne said that Napoleon neither expected nor desired a long peace. Our retention of Malta was an offence which he could not tolerate. But he did not hope to fight us alone; his hope was that, with Spain and Holland in his alliance, he should gain sufficient strength to crush us. Never-

theless, the war broke out too soon, and he was exasperated beyond measure at the turn events had taken, for the French Navy was reduced to a deplorable state, and the work of reconstruction had yet to be begun. The ravages of the Revolution had worked disastrously, and evils which powerfully affected the issue of the war had their root in the rank soil of corruption and neglect.

When the breach at length came, our fleets were immediately in movement. Cornwallis appeared off Brest to observe the preparations which were in progress, and he never relaxed his grip nor made it possible for the powerful fleet gathered there to get out, so that his control may be regarded as the really decisive factor in the campaign. Nelson proceeded to the Mediterranean, and, early in July 1803, was off Toulon, having his flag in the *Victory*, with a force altogether inadequate to meet the growing fleet which Latouche-Tréville was creating there, and which, when he died, passed to the weaker hand of Villeneuve. Reinforcements seldom reached Nelson; his supplies were very scarce, and everything had to be improvised, including his base at Maddalena. His long and anxious watch had not for its object to shut the French in, so much as to tempt them out, so that he might

"get at them," as he said. No one could penetrate the mind of Napoleon at this particular time. The fleets assembling at Brest, Rochefort, and Toulon, and those watched by Pellew, and afterwards by Cochrane and Calder, which returned from the West Indies, and got into Ferrol, were all intended to play their part in the vast scheme; while a great invasion flotilla was being created in the ports of the Channel and the ocean, and Holland and Spain were driven into alliance with France. Sometimes it was thought that Ireland was the object of the fleet, sometimes the Levant and Egypt, sometimes the Cape of Good Hope, and sometimes the West Indies. Nelson kept many eventualities in his mind, and wrote, "I shall follow them to the Antipodes." As to the project of invasion, it underwent many kaleidoscopic changes. To begin with, Bonaparte said, "Let us be masters of the Straits for six hours, and we shall be masters of the world." Afterwards a greater space of time was thought to be necessary; and finally, in the presence of our great fleets, it was seen that the operation must depend upon actual command of the sea, secured by force or snatched as a temporary advantage. It was with the view of concentrating his various forces, which were to slip through the

net of the blockade, that the rendezvous in the West Indies was decided upon, with the intention that the fleet should return and appear in the Channel in greatly superior force. It has sometimes been said that Nelson was decoyed to the West Indies, but that is altogether incorrect, for he went there in pursuit of a distinct object, and the last thing that the French would have desired was his appearance in that part of the world.

The blockade of the French coasts was steadily maintained; but, on the 11th January 1805, Missiessy got away from Rochefort, in the temporary absence of Sir Thomas Graves, and proceeded to the West Indies, but, not finding Villeneuve, returned to the port he had started from, without doing anything. Villeneuve made an attempt to escape from Toulon on the 18th January; but it was blowing hard, and several of his vessels suffered in their masts and rigging, so that he was compelled to put back to port. Nelson's well-known comment was, "These gentlemen are not accustomed to a Gulf of Lyons gale, which we have buffetted for twenty-one months and not carried away a spar." At last, however, on the 30th March, the French actually did put to sea from Toulon, and the news reached Nelson, who was off Sardinia, on the 4th April. He

was burning with anxiety "to get up with them"; and, though the wind was against him, he reached Gibraltar on the 6th May, it being then reported that the French and Spaniards had gone to the West Indies. Nelson actually started for the West Indies on the 11th May, having with him ten sail of the line and three frigates. The French were then a long way ahead, but by magnificent seamanship the West Indies were reached early in June; and there, through sheer ill-luck, Nelson missed his prey, for a mistaken report sent him to Trinidad, expecting to find them, when really they had gone north to Antigua, and were on their way homeward. Nelson took up the pursuit with every sail set, and passed through the Azores on 8th July, eight days behind Villeneuve; and, on the 19th, he anchored in Rosia Bay, Gibraltar, having really outrun the French admiral.

There had been great doubts at home as to the actual movements of the French; and it seemed to some likely that Ganteaume might escape with his twenty-one ships from Brest, and unite his forces with those which were refuged at Ferrol, probably defeating Calder, who was watching that port. But Nelson had sent the swift brig *Curieux* to warn the Admiralty of the course of events, and, under

Lord Barham's instant instructions, Calder was reinforced. He had complained bitterly of his inferiority, being left with only eight sail of the line; but Stirling, with five ships, was detached by Cornwallis, and five others came from before Rochefort, and, thus strengthened, he was instructed to proceed westward to meet the returning Frenchmen, which he did on the 22nd July, forty-nine leagues west of Ferrol. The French numbered twenty sail of the line, with three large armed vessels, five frigates, and three brigs, while Calder had only fifteen sail with two frigates. Possibly, if he had been a Nelson, a decisive action might have taken place, but, as it was, the engagement was inconclusive. Calder proposed to attack the enemy's centre; and when his squadron reached their rear, and the ships tacked in succession, the enemy tacked also, which obliged Calder to make the same manœuvre. The weather was foggy, and it was difficult to discern some of the vessels; but the firing lasted four hours, after which the French got away, escaping into Vigo, and leaving two sail of the line as prizes in Calder's hands. Calder was greatly blamed for not renewing the action on the following day, and ultimately was tried by court-martial. Nevertheless, he had scored a victory, and taken

two prizes against much superior forces. The truth appears to be that he had not realised the real inefficiency of the French Navy so thoroughly as had Nelson when he engaged the French so boldly at Trafalgar, subjecting certain of his ships to fire, which, if it had been directed by other hands, would have destroyed them. Villeneuve remained only a few days at Vigo, whence he proceeded to Ferrol, while Calder joined Cornwallis off Ushant.

The critical time had now come for the plans of Bonaparte. Villeneuve had his orders to leave Ferrol, and appear before Brest, where he was forbidden to enter the port; but Ganteaume was to come out and meet him, and the combined fleet was to proceed to Boulogne, where the "Army of England" was assembled, and, said Bonaparte, "We shall have avenged six centuries of insults and shame." But Villeneuve was not the man for the task, nor were his ships in a fit state. Accordingly, when the unfortunate admiral, with his ships worn out and reeking with disease, and his officers and men demoralised, encountered certain ships which he thought were a detachment of a large British fleet, he put over his helm and went southward to Cadiz, where he anchored on 17th August. "What a fleet! What sacrifices for nothing! What an

ACTION BETWEEN H.M.S. *PHŒNIX* AND THE FRENCH FRIGATE *DIDON*

August 10th, 1805

admiral! All hope destroyed!" cried Bonaparte in the bitterness of his disappointment; and thus, before Trafalgar was fought, the projects for the invasion of England were at an end, and Bonaparte turned to those military enterprises on land for the accomplishment of which his genius better fitted him.

"I am sure you bring me news of the French and Spanish fleets, and I think I shall yet have to beat them!" So spoke Nelson to Captain Blackwood of the *Euryalus*, who visited him at Merton at 5 o'clock on the morning of the 2nd September. Nelson followed Blackwood to the Admiralty, and immediately afterwards was definitely ordered to resume his command, from which he had been absent on leave. On the 13th September he drove "from dear, dear Merton, where I left all which I hold dear in this world," and arrived at the George Inn, Portsmouth, at 6 o'clock on the following morning. Southey has described the scene when he put off from the shore in his barge to join the *Victory*. The crowd gathered about him, many shedding tears, all pressing forward to see the last of the great admiral. He joined the fleet under Collingwood, off Cadiz, on the 29th September, and wrote to Lady Hamilton that his arrival was most welcome, not

only to Collingwood, but to everyone in the fleet. Then it was that he imparted to them the famous "Nelson touch," which he said was to them like an electric shock. It was the plan he had devised for attacking the combined fleet, and some of them shed tears, while all approved. "It was new, it was singular, it was simple," and, they said, "it must succeed, if ever they will allow us to get at them! You are, my lord, surrounded by friends whom you inspire with confidence." Afterwards Nelson said that *the reception he met with was the sweetest sensation of his life.* Everything was arranged as to the course to be pursued, and the plan formally issued to the captains in a Secret Memorandum embodied the "Nelson touch." The tactics of the great battle are not to be discussed here. Only, we will say that if we heed some statements of the historians and some plans of the battle, we cannot but say that Nelson fought the action in a manner differing from his plan, and possibly not in the best manner. But the truth is that he had ordered the course and formation of his fleet to bring about the situation described; and that, though the conditions were altered by the movements of the enemy, his plan was carried out in its real principles and essentials.

Slowly and painfully did Villeneuve get his great unwieldy fleet out from Cadiz; but, on the evening of the 20th October, he had formed it in line of battle, heading to the southward, with some reserve ships on the windward side. The English were in the immediate neighbourhood, and, on the morning of the 21st October, the two fleets were in sight of one another. The allied fleet formed the line of battle on the starboard tack, the reserve ships then in the van; but as the British squadron approached, and the French admiral saw an engagement could not be avoided, he judged it wise to turn in the direction of Cadiz again, so that he might return in the event of disaster. Therefore, he made a signal to the fleet to wear altogether, and form the line of battle on the port tack. There was very little wind, some of the ships were unhandy, and they were not skilfully managed, so that the wearing of the fleet took a long time, and, in the result, the line was formed very irregularly. Some of the ships were crowded together, and there was a considerable gap near the middle; while the whole line presented to the English approach a somewhat deep, but very irregular, crescent, with the midmost ships far to leeward.

The British fleet was formed in two columns,

Collingwood in the *Royal Sovereign* leading the lee line, and Nelson in the *Victory* the weather line. But the lightness of the wind caused some irregularity, and it was long before the ships could get into action. We may feel quite certain, in view of later discussions, that these columns were not perpendicular to the French line, or at least that the lee line approached more to a parallel with the rear portion of it, and was upon a line of bearing as was ordered by Collingwood. When Nelson had seen the order of the approach arranged, he went down to his cabin, and penned that well-known note in which he implored the Almighty to grant a great and glorious victory to his country, and prayed that no misconduct might tarnish it. Then he wrote and signed, in the presence of Blackwood and Hardy, that remarkable document, called the codicil to his will, in which he left Lady Hamilton as a legacy to his country, as likewise her daughter, saying, "These are the only favours I ask of my king and country at the moment when I am going to fight their battles." The advance of the fleet was at a rate of not more than about three knots, and the breeze got still lighter; but at about eleven o'clock, when the interval between the adversaries was a little more than two miles,

LORD NELSON'S FLAGSHIP LEADING THE WEATHER LINE INTO ACTION AT TRAFALGAR

October 21st, 1805

Nelson signalled to Collingwood that he intended to prevent them from getting into Cadiz, which they appeared to be intending to do. Then was made the celebrated signal, "England expects that every man will do his duty." It is said that Collingwood, when he saw this signal, remarked drily to his flag-lieutenant, "I wish Nelson would make no more signals: we all understand what we have to do." Nevertheless, when the signal was reported, he announced it to his ship's company, and it was received with great enthusiasm. The *Royal Sovereign*, as had been intended, was much ahead of the *Victory*, and was closely followed by the *Belleisle*, *Mars*, *Tonnant*, and others, which all steered direct for the rear division of the adversary's fleet, where Collingwood's fifteen ships attacked the fifteen in this part of the allied line, enveloping twelve of them in a furious conflict. As Nelson witnessed the approach, "See," he cried to Captain Blackwood, "see, how that noble fellow, Collingwood, takes his ship into action!" And it is believed that Collingwood about the same time exclaimed, "What would Nelson give to be here!" that is, to be first engaged with the enemy. About noon the *Royal Sovereign* had so far advanced that she probably had the horns of the crescent of

the allied fleet on either beam. In front was the huge *Santa Ana*, 112, flying the flag of Vice-Admiral Alava, and close astern her was the French *Fougueux*, 74, while the *San Leandro*, *San Justo*, and *Indomptable* were in the immediate vicinity, but had fallen a little to leeward. Now all the ships hoisted their colours, the English flying the white ensign, while at the *Victory's* main-topgallant mast-head was the signal, "Engage the enemy more closely."

The advance being slow, the *Royal Sovereign* was much exposed to fire, but she was not much damaged, and at about twenty minutes past noon she reached the enemy's line, passing under the stern of the *Santa Ana*, and across the bows of the *Fougueux*. The port and starboard carronades, loaded with round shot and a keg of five-hundred musket balls, were discharged right into the stern of the *Santa Ana* on the port side and the bows of the *Fougueux* on the starboard. Then all the guns as they came to bear, double or treble loaded, raked the two ships with tremendous effect as the *Royal Sovereign* went through; and Collingwood put over his helm, and came alongside the *Santa Ana*, engaging her broadside to broadside at pistol-shot range, and his ship was at the same time

exposed to the fire of the other four ships which have been named. But either the gunnery was bad, or the adversaries were afraid of damaging one another, for the *Royal Sovereign* did not at first suffer very severely, and the *Belleisle* soon came to her assistance, pouring another terrible broadside into the Spaniard as she passed by, and afterwards raking the *Indomptable*, after which she engaged the *Fougueux*, and then three other of the enemy's ships. The conflict in this part of the line became extremely violent. The *Santa Ana's* mizen-mast went, and much other damage was suffered. The *Royal Sovereign* lost her main-mast, which carried with it the mizen-mast, so that she became unmanageable, and after that the *Euryalus* had to take her in tow. The Spanish admiral was very seriously wounded. The *Belleisle* lost her mizen-mast six feet from the deck, and, though outmatched, continued a valorous fight with her many enemies; but she also lost her main-mast, fore-mast, and bowsprit, so that she was nearer to destruction than any of the vessels, though she kept her Union Jack flying bravely at the end of a handspike. She was afterwards relieved by the *Polyphemus*, *Defiance*, and *Swiftsure*.

But it is impossible to follow the glorious

fortunes of individual ships in the tremendous events of that memorable day. It had been the object of Nelson to prevent the enemy's van from interfering with the work of destruction which Collingwood was carrying on at the rear. Seeing that the French might wear, and go down to the assistance of the ships so closely engaged, he defeated the purpose by steering down towards the centre of the allied line, where was the huge *Santisima Trinidad*, of 130 guns, flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Cisneros. Nelson had hoped to engage Villeneuve in the *Bucentaure*, and eventually did so. As the *Victory* approached, she was subjected to a very heavy fire from several ships, and Nelson's secretary, Dr Scott, was killed by a round shot as he stood by the admiral's side. At about the same time a double-headed shot swept away eight marines from the poop, and part of the mizen top-mast was shot away and the sail torn to ribbons. It was a little before one o'clock when the *Victory* passed under the stern of the *Bucentaure*, fouling her vangs, and discharging her broadside into the French flagship, as the *Royal Sovereign* had done into the *Santa Ana*. It was afterwards said that in this tremendous destruction some twenty guns were dismounted and nearly four hundred

men killed or wounded in the *Bucentaure*. The *Victory* drifted clear of Villeneuve's flagship, but she came under the fire of the *Neptune* and *Redoutable*, and the ships were here so close that she fell foul of the latter, and they became locked together. Fire and destruction wrought havoc in both of them, and the men in the *Redoutable's* tops cleared the *Victory's* forecastle and upper deck. French and English were equally matched in courage here; and brave Captain Lucas, of the *Redoutable*, endeavoured to board the British flagship, but the boarders were swept away by fire.

Then came the melancholy event of the day. A shot from the *Redoutable's* mizen-top struck Nelson on the left shoulder as he stood near the hatchway looking aft, and the bullet passed through the epaulet, and down through the lungs and spine, and lodged in the muscles of the back. The grief-stricken flag captain attempted to raise the fallen hero, who said, "They have done for me at last, Hardy." "I hope not," said Hardy; but Nelson replied, "Yes; my backbone is shot through." They carried him below to the cockpit, where he did not die for more than three hours. At about the time when he fell, several other officers and about forty men were killed or wounded in the

Victory, and again Captain Lucas thought of boarding. Some of the French did, indeed, gain the *Victory's* quarter-deck, but were driven back; and then down came the *Téméraire*, under gallant Captain Harvey, giving the *Redoutable*, to which the *Téméraire's* men lashed her, a terrible raking broadside, that was decisive, and she struck her flag. Now the *Fougueux*, which had suffered so heavily in the fight with the *Royal Sovereign* and *Belleisle*, appeared through the battle smoke, only to receive a destructive broadside from the *Téméraire*, double-shotted, as they fell foul of one another, and the *Fighting Téméraire's* men sprang on board and the *Fougueux* was overpowered. Immortal in naval annals, and glorious on the canvas of one of our greatest painters, who has depicted her, in sunset glory, towed to her last berth, is the *Fighting Téméraire*. Thus does Mr Newbolt give the refrain of her departure—

"Now the sunset breezes shiver,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
And she's fading down the river,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
Now the sunset breezes shiver,
And she's fading down the river;
But in England's song for ever,
She's the *Fighting Téméraire*."

The *Victory* got clear from this tremendous crowd of fighting ships and made away to the North. By this time the battle was really over, for all the other ships had been playing a like gallant part. The *Victory*, *Téméraire*, *Royal Sovereign*, *Belleisle*, *Bellerophon*, and *Colossus* suffered most. Some of the French and Spanish ships had been terribly handled, and were in a perilous condition, many of them dismasted and little more than floating hulks. Dumanoir, with four French ships and one Spaniard from the allied van, appears to have thought that he might cause the English some serious loss; but, being unsupported, he hesitated to plunge into the fight, and so made good his escape with the four French ships, only to be encountered off Cape Ortegal, on the 4th November, by Sir Richard Strachan, who captured the whole of them. Nelson expired at half-past four, saying, "Thank God, I have done my duty!" He had intended that the fleet should be anchored at the close of the day, but Collingwood judged this inadvisable. At night, however, it came on to blow, and the dismasted and shattered prizes were at the mercy of the weather. One of them was retaken; others drifting near Cadiz were seized by a bold sortie of the enemy; some were wrecked

and others scuttled; and only four of them were taken to Gibraltar.

But the battle had broken up the coalition between France and Spain, and for a time the naval power of France was entirely broken. Nevertheless, she was not deprived of resources, for the great fleet had been untouched at Brest; and in the following winter, the Admiralty having somewhat relaxed the closeness of the blockade, owing to a fear of exposing our ships to the terrible weather, Vice-Admiral Leissègues with five ships, and Rear-Admiral Willaumez with six, were able to escape, on the 13th December—the former to be defeated by Sir John Duckworth, off San Domingo, on the 6th February 1806, and the latter, after an adventurous cruise in West Indian waters and the North Atlantic, to have his squadron wasted by storms, and broken up in action with various British forces. The Dutch settlements at the Cape were reduced by a naval and military expedition; and our old adversary, Linois, was captured off the Azores by Sir John Borlase Warren, the 13th March 1806. Thus was the French Navy driven from the seas, and during the year 1807 the remaining ships kept closely to their ports.

But the danger from the Napoleonic coalitions was

not at an end; and Turkey, Denmark, and afterwards Russia were forced to take part against us. By his Continental system Napoleon sought to ruin our trade by closing ports against us and making neutral vessels liable to capture if they had touched at any British ports. He compelled the Sultan to close the Dardanelles against Russia, at that time our ally; and, therefore, Sir John Duckworth was ordered to proceed to Constantinople and demand the surrender of the Turkish fleet. With eight sail of the line and four smaller vessels he arrived at the mouth of the Dardanelles on the 11th February 1807, and eventually forced a passage; but one of his ships caught fire and blew up, and, the situation becoming dangerous, Duckworth decided to withdraw. He was engaged with the forts on the Dardanelles as he returned, and some of his ships suffered severely; but he had shown pluck and courage, and, when he returned, the public were dazzled with the story of his exploits, although his mission had failed ignominiously.

But now the Russians, whom we had not aided effectually, turned against us, and the new allies sought to obtain the fleets of Sweden and Denmark for our undoing. Not to be taken at such disadvantage, we quickly adopted the initiative, Admiral

Gambier being sent with a fleet of seventeen sail of the line and twenty thousand men to Copenhagen to demand the surrender of the Danish fleet. Copenhagen was bombarded, and the Danes capitulated, their fleet of eighteen sail of the line and many frigates being carried off by the victors; but it was not one of the most glorious engagements, and it turned a possible friend into a bitter enemy.

In February 1808 there were operations also in the Mediterranean, where Ganteaume, having left Toulon with ten sail of the line, landed troops in Corfu. He was pursued by Collingwood, but not brought to action, and returned safely to his port. And now the Spaniards, weary of their hard alliance with the French, implored our assistance, which was given readily; and five French ships at Cadiz, which had escaped from Trafalgar, were compelled to surrender; while a Russian squadron in the Tagus, comprising nine sail of the line, under Admiral Seniavine, was trapped, and compelled to surrender to Sir Charles Cotton, the Portuguese having thrown in their lot with the Spaniards. Sir James Saumarez was also engaged with the Russians in the Baltic, but could not inflict any serious damage upon them, beyond the loss of one ship, the *Sevolod*, of 74 guns.

The French in Martinique were at this time sadly pressed for aid, and, there being still a considerable force at Brest, Admiral Willaumez, who had put to sea from that port in December 1805, and whose cruise had been so disastrous, was again instructed to leave, which he did, evading the blockading fleet of Lord Gambier, on the 21st February 1809. He was to drive off the British ships at Lorient, release the force blockaded there, and then to proceed to the Basque roads, where he was to unite with his flag the ships remaining at Rochefort, and then to make the best course he could for Martinique. He escaped from Brest in bad weather, and found that at Lorient the only ships which could join him were frigates, which were soon destroyed by a British squadron. Willaumez, thus disappointed, proceeded towards Rochefort, and anchored near the Ile D'Aix, having lost one of his ships of the line on the shore as he went south. Allemand relieved him, and Gambier proceeded with eleven ships of the line to blockade the assembled French force, which comprised an equal number of vessels.

The enterprising spirits in Gambier's fleet proposed to send in fireships to destroy the ships lying in the roads, many young officers being eager

for the exploit, and Lord Gambier wrote to the Admiralty to send out suitable vessels. Just at the time Lord Cochrane arrived in Plymouth Sound, in the *Impérieuse* frigate, fresh from his brilliant service, and having made the name of the little *Speedy* famous in our naval annals. There was no more popular officer; and, Cochrane being well acquainted with the intricate navigation of the Aix roads, it was decided to appoint him to command the flotilla of fireships. He, however, knowing that jealousy might be caused, as had indeed happened when a similar enterprise was proposed at Brest in 1804, would willingly have been excused. But Cochrane was the right man for the daring business, and he was therefore sent out. He was eager to organise the attack, but Gambier began to entertain doubts, just as he had done when he was at the Admiralty, and the proposed burning of the French ships at Brest was brought before the Board by Lord Melville. As might have been expected, the officers in his squadron were indignant at the slight offered by Cochrane's appointment, while Gambier first refused to give him permission to proceed, and next day changed his mind. The weather was bad, but Cochrane was not to be deterred, and accordingly,

on the 11th April 1809, he went in with the flotilla of explosion vessels and fireships. The night was dark and stormy, and the leading explosion vessel ran upon a boom, the existence of which had not been suspected, a terrific explosion resulting, and the boats were seriously endangered. But the boom was broken through, and the fireships swept on towards the vessels lying at anchor. Unfortunately, they were set on fire and turned adrift too soon, with the result that only one of them grappled an enemy, and this did no serious damage. But the French were thoroughly alarmed and in a state of panic, and, with one exception, they cut their cables and let their ships drift in confusion towards the shoals. At daybreak it was seen that nearly all were aground and helpless, and in an excellent position to be attacked. Cochrane tried long in vain to get permission from Gambier, and the tide was rising and might float the stranded ships; but at last the fleet moved in, only to anchor again, and Cochrane, in desperation, went in with his own frigate alone. Thereupon Gambier was moved to send two ships of the line and five frigates to assist him; but the whole squadron was soon recalled, though still another effort was made in vain. Cochrane was exasperated by what had occurred, and Gambier

demanded a court-martial, which, being favourably inclined to him, exculpated him from censure. Eventually, Cochrane, on an ill-founded charge, was removed from the service, but was reinstated some years later, public acclaim reversing the verdict.

We must pass over the rather futile operations of Sir Richard Strachan and the Earl of Chatham in the expedition to the Scheldt. The naval part of the expedition was well conducted, but Chatham was inactive, and the operations were a failure. Neither is it necessary to deal with the scattered events of the year 1810, nor with Hoste's victory over Dubourdieu, off Lissa, in March 1811.

Nor again is it necessary to enter into the causes which brought about the serious conflict with the United States in 1812. It is said that Nelson once saw an American squadron in European waters; but whether it was Captain Dale's in 1801, Captain Morris's in 1802–3, or Captain Preble's in 1803, is not known. His comment is stated to have been, "There is, in the handling of those Transatlantic ships, a nucleus of trouble for the Navy of Great Britain." This judgment was not without foundation, for, though the United States had no fleet, they had well-handled frigates, partly manned by British deserters, and we lost the *Guerrière*, 48;

Macedonian, 48; and *Java*, 46. But the fine seamanship of British officers was displayed in these actions, and still more in the famous episode of the *Chesapeake* and the *Shannon*, the latter commanded by Captain Broke, at Boston, on the 1st June 1813. The two vessels were nearly equal, but the *Chesapeake* a little larger, and carrying more men; while the *Shannon*, which had been seven years in commission, was in an admirable state of order and discipline. Captain Lawrence of the *Chesapeake* sent a challenge to Captain Broke, which, however, probably never reached his hands; but the British saw the American coming down from the harbour, evidently meaning to attack, and, when the two frigates were within 50 yards of one another, they opened fire. The *Shannon's* gunnery soon told, and the two frigates fell foul of one another, the American not being well handled, while a chest of ammunition exploded on her quarter-deck, and volumes of flame leapt up the masts and rigging, and the men were driven from their guns. Thereupon Captain Broke led a party of boarders, who drove most of the enemy below; and the maintop, crowded with sharpshooters, was carried by a midshipman, William Smith, who ran along the *Shannon's* foreyard to the *Chesapeake's* mainyard,

and so reached the top. Another midshipman, named Cosnahan, cleared the mizentop by sustained fire from the *Shannon's* yard-arm. Thus was the *Chesapeake* taken, and the episode is famous in British and American naval annals. Gallant Captain Lawrence of the *Chesapeake* was dying from his wounds, while Captain Broke, his not less gallant adversary, was grievously wounded in the head; and the *Shannon* and her prize were taken into Halifax by Lieutenant Wallis, who died so recently as February 1892, in his 101st year, as Admiral of the Fleet Sir Provo William Parry Wallis.

The American war led to operations on the Canadian Lakes, where several engagements took place to our disadvantage, and the struggle continued till the end of 1814, and indeed later, because the combatants were unaware that peace had been signed at Ghent on the 14th December. The nations were exhausted by the long conflict, and looking forward to peace, while the empire of Napoleon was rapidly marching towards its fall. The Peninsular war had been brought to its glorious close; nearly all the States of Europe had risen against the great aggressor; the allies entered Paris; Louis XVIII. ascended the throne; and peace was

declared in 1814. But while the allied sovereigns were still disputing at the Congress of Vienna as to the terms of the settlement, Napoleon escaped from Elba, and the battle of Waterloo was fought on 18th June 1815, followed by Napoleon's second abdication, and the Treaty of Paris.

CHAPTER VII

"THE LAST OF THE WOODEN WALLS"

THE second Treaty of Paris was signed on the 20th November 1815, and the Long Peace was inaugurated. For nigh half a century the Navy was not to be called upon for hostilities against a European foe, but other work had to be accomplished. For years, roughly speaking from 1818 to 1850, Arctic exploration was carried on by the Navy with the greatest perseverance. The story of it is one too long to be told in these pages; but the talent, courage, and success shown in its achievement have added to the laurel wreath of the fleet a lustre as brilliant as that earned by any triumphs won in war. Moreover, in the era now under consideration, the whole Navy was to be metamorphosed; the sailing ship as a vessel of war was to disappear, and our sailing Navy was to become a steam fleet. The story of this great change, however, will be best narrated later. Here it will suffice to sketch the war

history of the Navy between 1815 and 1860. The Treaty of Paris had not been signed a year before the fleet was again called upon for active service. The war had left England undisputed mistress of the seas, and, this being her position, the duty of policing these seas devolved upon her. The pirates' nest that the Dey of Algiers controlled had become intolerable to the commerce of Europe. On England devolved the task of bringing its depredations to an end, nor was the task a light one. Algiers was protected by fortifications mounting some five hundred guns:—eighteen 24 and 32 pounders, but with also some of heavier calibre. There was, besides, a naval force of nine large frigates and corvettes, and some forty mortar boats to be taken into calculation. In fact, the task entrusted to Admiral Lord Exmouth was very much the same as faced Blake at Tunis. Lord Exmouth, as Sir Edward Pellew, had been one of the most dashing frigate captains of the great war. As a young officer he had earned repeated promotion by his gallantry. In 1793 he took the first frigate in the French war; in 1796, under circumstances of the greatest bravery, he saved the passengers and crew of a transport driven ashore in Plymouth Sound, and in the same year was created a baronet. In

the following year, whilst in command of the 44-gun frigate *Indefatigable*, and in company with the 36-gun frigate, the *Amazon*, he engaged and destroyed the French 74-gun ship of the line, *Le Droit de l'Homme*, one of the most memorable actions of the great war. At the close of that war he was Admiral of the Blue, G.C.B., and Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, and to his hands was entrusted the task of exacting the restitution of prisoners, and of once and for all abolishing slavery at Tunis, Tripoli, and Algiers, the three great strongholds of the Mahamedan pirates. In Blake's day, Algiers yielded at once, overawed by the fate that had befallen Tunis. To Exmouth, Tunis and Tripoli gave in without resistance; but Algiers not only refused the British demands, but seized and imprisoned the British consul and some naval officers who were on shore. Exmouth, whose flag flew in the *Queen Charlotte*, 100, had with him five line-of-battle ships, five frigates, four bomb vessels, and five brigs; and, previous to engaging, was reinforced by five British gunboats, and a Dutch squadron of four frigates and two corvettes, whose admiral, Van Capellan, prayed to be allowed to join Lord Exmouth in his enterprise. On the 27th August the attack was

made, the *Queen Charlotte* anchoring about fifty yards from the mole head, in the centre of a line which had ahead of her, the frigates; astern, the ships of the line; and, astern of them, the Dutch squadron. This was at two in the afternoon, and for over six hours the engagement lasted. So hot was the fire from the Algerine batteries that in three hours the *Impregnable*, the last in line of Exmouth's ships of the line, had lost one hundred and fifty men, and had begged for a frigate to be sent to divert the enemy's fire. Nor were the Algerine seamen slow in attempting the offensive, for their gunboats made a gallant effort to close on and board the *Leander*, the leading frigate in the line; but a superb fire sent the majority to the bottom before the attack could be driven home; and on its repulse the admiral sent in the barge of the flagship, which, under the command of Lieutenant Richards, boarded and set on fire an Algerine frigate, and soon the whole of the enemy's closely-packed ships were in a blaze. The fire from the forts, however, was not silenced before midnight, and by that time the casualties in the British fleet were fifteen officers and one hundred and thirty men killed, and sixteen officers and six hundred and thirty-three men wounded. Our Dutch allies

had lost thirteen killed and fifty-two wounded. At 2 A.M. on the morning of the 28th, the fleet drew off to an outer anchorage; and when the Dey was invited to submit, he unconditionally accepted all the British terms. The outcome was that no less than one thousand two hundred Christians were released from cruel and barbarous slavery. It is an interesting fact, and worth noting, that less than half a century ago Exmouth's flagship, the *Queen Charlotte*, renamed the *Excellent*, became the home of the great gunnery school of the Navy at Portsmouth; and when this, the most important establishment of the Navy, was installed on shore at Whale Island, the figurehead of the *Queen Charlotte* was built into the wall of the new gunnery establishment. The suppression of piracy and slavery in the Mediterranean was, however, but the commencement of a long period of policing the seas, for, from that date up till 1860, Great Britain's Navy was unceasing in its attempts for the suppression of piracy and slavery throughout the world. The corsairs in the eastern Mediterranean, the Malay pirates of Borneo and the Malayan Peninsula, those of the China Coast, and the Arab raiders of the Persian Gulf and the East Coast of Africa, were all in turn crushed, and on the Navy also devolved

the task of the suppression of the slave trade that had its headquarters on the West Coast of Africa.

During 1824–26 the Navy played a big part in the first Burmese war. Under the command of Commodore Grant, who flew his broad pennant in the *Liffey*, a 50-gun frigate, it was a small naval force that destroyed the defences of Rangoon, and opened the route for the army's attack that was to thoroughly humble and reduce Burma to submission. Moreover, in the campaign that followed, Naval brigades, both on shore and in boat work, played a great part. To the Naval historian the first Burmese war is one of intense interest, for it was in that war that for the first time a steam-propelled vessel was used as a ship of war. This was the *Diana*, a small steam-paddle vessel.

The Burmese war had scarcely closed before it was necessary to again employ "the right arm of the empire" in European waters, and against a civilised, if hardly European, foe. For years Greece had been striving to free herself from Turkish control; a conflict, carried on with unbridled ferocity and unutterable cruelties, had turned the Eastern Mediterranean into a hell, and the patience of the Great Powers had become strained to breaking-point. England, France, and Russia combined

to put an end to an intolerable state of affairs. Sir Edward Codrington, who was our commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, together with Admiral Derigny in command of the French fleet in the Near East, held a conference at Navarino with Ibraham Pasha, who was Turkish commander-in-chief both on land and at sea. Ibraham assented to an armistice; but later, hearing that Greek ships had attacked Turkish ships and batteries in Salonica Bay, despatched a strong naval force to attack the Greeks in the Gulf of Corinth. This force was met, on 3rd October 1827, by Codrington, and the display of British power induced the Turkish commander to return to Navarino. Navarino lies at the south-west end of the Morean Peninsula; and Ibraham, unable to bring his naval force round the peninsula, proceeded to devastate the whole of Morea with fire and sword in the manner customary to the Turk when his fanatical passions are roused. To put a stop to this ferocious cruelty, Codrington and Derigny, who had also been joined by a Russian contingent, under Rear-Admiral Heiden, entered the harbour of Navarino, anchored in front of the combined Turkish and Egyptian fleet, and proceeded to again open negotiations with Ibraham. It was in its initiation nothing more than

a peaceful demonstration. Codrington's flagship, the *Asia*, had the band playing on deck, and the ships were not even cleared for action, the lower ports being closed. The Turkish fleet, which comprised three ships of the line, fifteen large frigates, and some seventy smaller craft, was moored in the form of a crescent in such a manner that vessels anchored in the bay would be exposed to the concentrated fire of all the Turkish ships. At the entrance of the anchorage six Turkish fireships had been placed. The allied fleet consisted of British, three ships of the line, four frigates; French, three ships of the line, two frigates; Russian, four ships of the line, four frigates, and some half-dozen smaller craft. This force Sir Edward led into the bay in two columns; the weather-line led by himself in his flagship, the *Asia*, comprised the British and French ships, the Russians composing the lee-line. On coming to anchor, the admiral sent in a boat, conveying Mr Mitchell, the pilot of the fleet, with a courteous but firm request to the Turkish admiral requiring compliance with the demands of the allies; and, almost simultaneously, one of our frigates, the *Dartmouth*, who could not take up the station she desired, sent a boat, under Lieutenant Fitzroy, to the nearest of the Turkish fireships, to

make a request that she would move further in. Both boats were greeted with a volley, both Lieutenant Fitzroy and Mr Mitchell being killed, and in an instant the action became general. For four hours the Turks, utterly overmatched as they were, fought with that superb courage and defiance of death that is so characteristic of the Mussulman. The first gun had been fired an hour after noon, and by five the action was finished. No prizes were taken, but two-thirds of the Turkish fleet had ceased to exist; and though the actual details of casualties are vague, it is estimated that some four thousand of the Turks perished. The losses of the allies amounted only to six hundred and fifty killed and wounded.

But little more than ten years were to elapse before we were again to find ourselves at grips with the Mahamedan. The Sultan of Turkey and his vassal, the Pasha of Egypt, had for some years been engaged in a more or less intermittent series of hostilities; and, in 1840, England, Austria, Russia, and Prussia came to the aid of Turkey, and concluded with that power a treaty agreeing to compel Mahamed Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, to accept the very reasonable terms that his Turkish suzerain had offered him. Mahamed Ali refusing

compliance with the terms of the allies, operations on the Syrian coast were commenced by the Mediterranean fleet, then under the command of Admiral Sir R. Stopford. The most important of these engagements was the attack on Acre, a fortress which the Egyptians deemed to be impregnable, as it had taken Ibraham Pasha (son of Mahamed Ali and Egyptian commander-in-chief), with forty thousand men at his disposal, not less than ten months to subdue it, when Syria had been seized from Turkey some few years before. The fleet under Sir R. Stopford comprised seven line of battleships, four frigates, four steamers, and two sloops of the Royal Navy. There was also a Turkish 74-gun ship, flying the flag of Admiral Walker Bey, the Turkish commander-in-chief, and two frigates and a sloop of the Austrian Navy. The place was one immensely difficult of attack, for not only were the batteries mounted with two hundred guns and manned by upwards of five thousand men, but the navigation of the approaches was difficult, and all the channels had to be sounded and buoyed, a task superbly performed by the masters of the fleet. On the 3rd of November the attack was made, and, although the signal to weigh had been made at 9.30 in the morning, owing to

the lightness of the breeze, it was nearly two o'clock before the ships were in a position to commence the bombardment. In consequence of some error in the disposition of the main fleet, those ships which were to the northward of the flagship, and formed part of the division of five battleships and one frigate that attacked the western face of the fortifications, found themselves at too great a distance from the forts to be really effective. The brunt of the attack fell on Commodore Napier's division, which comprised two battleships, four frigates, and the smaller and foreign craft, and it engaged in the attack on the south and east of the spit of land on which the fortress of Acre stands. The four paddle steam sloops took up action midway between the main fleet and that of Commodore Napier, but further out to sea. For two hours the bombardment raged with fury, until at four o'clock the principal magazine of the enemy burst with an appalling explosion, demolishing a large portion of the town and fortifications in its neighbourhood, as well as the bulk of two regiments of infantry that were in its vicinity, standing to arms in readiness to repel any attempt at storming. It is believed that this effect was achieved by the explosion of a shell fired from one of the steam

H.M. BATTLESHIP *QUEEN*

1839

vessels. The result absolutely disheartened the enemy; but whilst their fire slackened, ours continued with unabated energy, and by sunset scarcely two score of the guns in the enemy's powerful batteries remained serviceable. At daybreak some deserters came off with the news that the garrison was evacuating the town, and shortly afterwards our men took possession of it in the name of the Sultan. What the exact losses of the enemy amounted to is uncertain, but they must have been enormously heavy, for the loss caused by the explosion of the magazine alone is variously computed at from one thousand two hundred to two thousand lives. The loss of the allies was trifling. In all, the British lost but twelve killed and thirty-two wounded, and the Austrians two killed and six wounded, and the Turkish flagship four killed and three wounded. The Egyptians evidently fired high, for, though most of the ships were more or less hulled, yet, in the majority of cases, it was the masts and rigging that most suffered. There was a little fighting after the fall of Acre, but it was entirely confined to the forces on shore, and, practically, the fall of Acre decided the war. Three months later peace was declared, Syria was restored to the Sultan, and the govern-

ment of Egypt made hereditary in the family of Mahamed Ali.

Whilst these events were occurring in the Near East the British Navy was also earning fresh laurels in the Far East. In 1833 the trade of China, which before had been the exclusive privilege of the Honourable East India Company, had been thrown open to all merchants, and the following year Lord Napier had been despatched to Canton, on a special mission for the regulation of that trade. Lord Napier was treated with insolence; and the British frigates *Imogen* and *Andromeda* were even fired upon, a fire which they returned with effects that soon brought the Chinese, for the time, to their senses. Our demands were acceded to, and trade was opened up. A few days later Lord Napier died, being succeeded as British Commissioner by Captain Elliott. In a year or two the Chinese had become as arrogant as ever; and, in 1839, a determined attack by a flotilla of war junks and fireships was made on two small British ships, the *Volage* 28 and the *Hyacinth* 18, the only British forces then lying in the Canton river. The Chinese admiral was utterly routed, his flotilla destroyed, disabled, or put to flight, the British losses amounting to one man wounded. The

Chinese, however, described Admiral Kwang's action as a glorious victory, and it was plain that they required to be taught a lesson. To reinforce the *Hyacinth* and *Volage*, Commodore Sir Gordon Bremer proceeded with his own 74-gun ship, the *Wellesley*, two frigates, two sloops, and two small war steamers belonging to the East India Company. The flotilla also took with it four transports conveying a brigade of troops to be used for such land operations as might be deemed necessary. Bremer's plan of operations was bold, and excellently carried out. Leaving the frigates *Druid* and *Volage*, the sloop *Hyacinth*, and the steamer *Madagascar* to blockade the Canton river, he proceeded north; and, on the 4th July, he reduced the island of Chusan, and captured its main city, Tinghai, strongly fortified, without the loss of a single man. Amoy, another island half way between Macao and Chusan, near the mainland, facing Formosa, surrendered to a single 44-gun frigate, the *Blonde*, commanded by Captain Bourchier. The day that Chusan surrendered, Admiral Elliott, the commander-in-chief, arrived in the *Melville*, 74, taking over the command from Sir Gordon Bremer; with him came Captain Elliott, the British commissioner, and the squadron at once

proceeded north to the mouth of the Pei Ho, thus threatening Pekin itself. The Chinese, alarmed, professed compliance with our demands, and Elliott allowed himself to be cajoled into returning with his fleet to Canton, where our commissioner and the Chinese plenipotentiaries might come to an amicable understanding. For nearly a year the Chinese protracted negotiations, their object being to strengthen the defences of Canton; and, this being achieved, they followed their usual course of insult and set us openly at defiance. The war had to be commenced all over again, the command as before being in the hands of Sir Gordon Bremer, owing to the invaliding of Admiral Elliott. As in the preceding summer, Bremer quickly formed his plans, and proceeded promptly to put them into execution. The main attack this time was to be on Canton itself, which lies some seventy miles up the river from the sea. Thirty miles up are the islands of Chuenpee and Tycocktow, both strongly fortified; whilst a little farther up is the narrow Boca Tigris Channel, protected by the powerful Bogue Forts. All these fortifications had been immensely strengthened and enlarged, and the river itself obstructed by the sinking of large boats laden with stone. On the 7th January 1841, a combined

land and sea attack was made on the islands, both falling, a flotilla of war junks sharing their fate; and, dismayed by the pertinacity of the British, the formidable Bogue Forts surrendered without firing a shot. The whole of the operations were effected with the loss of one officer, Lieutenant Bower, killed, and two officers and eight men wounded. Again the Chinese humbled themselves, our demands were yielded to, and, by a preliminary treaty, Hong Kong was ceded, and taken formal possession of, on the 26th January. No sooner had the British fleet left the river than the Chinese again resumed their old tactics. The promised decree for the re-opening of trade was never issued. Work in strengthening and repairing the forts was being rapidly proceeded with; troops were being levied and collected; the Chinese put a reward on the heads of the commodore and Captain Elliott, the British commissioner; and at last, to fill the cup, the *Nemesis*, which had gone up the river with a communication for Keshen, the chief of the Chinese commissioners, was fired upon as she passed the Bogue Forts.

Once more a move was made on Canton, this time in strong force, for Commodore Bremer's squadron comprised three line-of-battle ships, five

frigates, a sloop, and two paddleships. The Bogue Forts, however, had been rendered more formidable than ever; and not less than 359 guns, many of large calibre, defended the narrow channel of the river. The channel, moreover, was barred by huge rafts moored by chain cables, and the Chinese considered the whole position as impregnable. The attack was made on the 26th February, and, after the fire of the ships had silenced the batteries, soldiers and marines were landed and the works stormed. Our whole loss comprised only ten wounded, the Chinese losing some five hundred killed, and leaving in our hands some two thousand five hundred prisoners. The large vessels were of too great draught to proceed further up the river, but on the following day the small craft pushed forward. The forts at Whampoa fell, then those protecting the Macao passage, and, by the 18th March, Canton lay at our mercy. Again, however, we showed a most misplaced leniency; for on the Chinese humbling themselves and declaring the Canton river open to trade, we ceased hostilities, and returned to the sea. Our failure to occupy Canton had naturally the usual result, and in May it became necessary to again resume hostilities. The officers in command had by this time changed. Sir Humphrey Senhouse

had succeeded Sir Gordon Bremer as commodore; whilst the land forces, brought up to a strength of two thousand two hundred men, were under the command of Sir Hugh Gough. The river was again forced; and this time, owing to our improved knowledge of its navigation, the *Blenheim*, 74, Senhouse's flagship, was brought up to within six miles of Canton. The fire of the batteries was silenced by the ships, and they were then stormed and captured by the troops, who had been reinforced by a naval brigade of one thousand marines and bluejackets. Sir Hugh Gough had forced his way to the gates, and was prepared for the final storming, when, on the 27th May, the town surrendered. Again peace was made, the Chinese paying a sum of six million dollars as ransom for their city; whilst we agreed to restore the forts and fortified places which we had captured and were holding, and again return to the mouth of the river. This peace, however, was only with the Cantonese, and hostilities still continued with the rest of China. In August, Rear-Admiral Sir William Parker, commander-in-chief on the East Indies Station, arrived and took over command, and almost immediately, in concert with Sir Hugh Gough, prepared for a campaign in the North. Amoy was the first ob-

jective; and, despite the fact that its defences had been very considerably increased since its capture in the previous year, it was easily taken. Next Chusan was taken, as well as the powerful and well-defended towns of Chinghai and Ning-po; but the Chinese still held out, and, in May 1842, Sir William Parker determined on the capture of Nankin, the ancient capital of the empire, which stands some one hundred and fifty miles from the mouth of the great river Yang-tze-Kiang. Previous to the present enterprise, it had never been entered by a British ship. Sir William had perfect confidence in the surveying officers of his fleet, and was confident of his ability to take his ships and the army to the gates of Nankin. In the middle of June, Woosung and Shanghai, which lie at the mouth of the river, were captured, and, on the 6th July, the advance up the river commenced. Including transports, no fewer than seventy vessels followed the admiral's flag; and, in spite of the dangerous navigation, and thanks to the superb skill of the surveying officers, the fleet anchored within half a mile of the fortified lines of Nankin. Again, the Chinese forsook their arrogance and conceit, abjectly humbled themselves; and commissioners, with full powers from the Emperor, were at once hurried off to

arrange for a peace. This was definitely signed; and, on the 29th, Canton, Ning-po, Shanghai, and Foo Chow Foo were open to foreign trade as treaty ports; Hong Kong was ceded in perpetuity to Great Britain, and a war indemnity of $21,000,000 was paid.

From the close of the first China war until that with Russia, some twelve years later, the Navy was only engaged in one campaign that might be styled naval. This was in 1845, when, owing to the unsettled condition of affairs on the eastern coast of South America, France and Russia determined to intervene. General Rosas, the dictator of Buenos Ayres, allied with Oribe, the discredited president of Uruguay, had invested Monte Video with land troops, and shut it off from the sea by a squadron of small war ships. England and France determined to intervene; the Buenos Ayres squadron was seized, and Monte Video relieved. From Colonia, a port further up the Rio de la Plata, the force with which Rosas had some time before taken possession of it was expelled; and a combined squadron, under Captains Hotham and Trehouart, pushed up the river to a point some three hundred miles from Monte Video, to convoy thither a fleet of gunboats which Gari-

baldi, then for the first time coming into note, was prepared to lead up the Uruguay. The feat was a remarkable one, and reflected immense credit on Commander Sulivan, the surveyor and pilot to the force, inasmuch as it was generally supposed that no vessel drawing more than twelve feet of water could pass more than a few miles up the river, whereas the smallest of the British ships drew thirteen, and one, the *Gorgon*, no less than seventeen feet of water. The junction of the Uruguay and Parana forms the broad estuary known as the Rio de la Plata, and it was now determined that the Parana river, which Rosas had kept closed for several years, should be open to European commerce. The enterprise was a daring one, for, in addition to the difficulties of navigation, there were at Obligado, some hundred miles from the point above Buenos Ayres, where the Parana and Uruguay unite, heavy batteries and a barrier across the river composed of ships and chain cables. On the eastern bank of the river there were four batteries,—two sixty feet above the stream; one on lower ground, and another close to and on a level with the water's edge. In all, these forts mounted twenty-two heavy guns and a rocket tube, while eight field-pieces were posted in

the woods in the rear, and, at intervals down the bank, posts had been fixed to give the gunners the correct range. The barrier comprised four-and-twenty empty ships moored below the batteries, all connected together by three chain cables which passed across them from shore to shore. Above the barrier, to protect its extremities, was at one end a 6-gun schooner, at the other two gunboats, whilst in the centre of the river a flotilla of ten fireships lay ready for action. The attacking force on the part of the English included four 6-gun sloops, two of which were paddleships, one 3-gun sloop, and a small tender; whilst the French had four ships of from 4 to 18 guns, with a 2-gun paddle sloop, the *Fulton*. The attack was made in two squadrons, each comprising two English and two French ships. The left comprised two English, the *Philomel* 6 guns, the *Fanny* 1 gun (a small tender), and the French *Expeditive* 18 and *Proceda* 4; the right comprised the French *San Martin* 8 and *Pandora* 12, and the English *Comus* of 6 and the *Dolphin* of 3 guns. The three steamships, *Gorgon* 6, *Firebrand* 6, and *Fulton* 2, were in reserve. Little known as the incident is, except to students of Naval history, it is not the least brilliant in the annals of the British Navy or

indeed of that of the French. The insurgents' ships were destroyed, the barrier broken, and, finally, the batteries stormed by a landing brigade. Our ships and boats received much damage, and those of the French even more; but, in actual killed and wounded, our losses amounted only to thirty-three men, the French losses being a little heavier. The combined fleets then pushed on to Corrientes, nearly eight hundred miles from the mouth of the river, where they were warmly welcomed by the inhabitants, who desired to re-open intercourse with, and restore unanimity into, their provinces. Here Hotham collected the flotilla of two hundred merchant ships, laden with up-country produce, for convoy to the sea. This was in June 1846; and Rosas, who had a strongly fortified position at San Lorenzo, some three hundred miles above Obligado, prepared to resist. The allies had been reinforced by two steam sloops, the *Elector* (English) and the *Gassendi* (French), the former having brought out from England a powerful rocket battery. The batteries at San Lorenzo were, if not so powerful as those at Obligado, better placed, as they were at an elevation of some seventy feet, and on ground so steep that they were protected from any attempt to land and storm them. The

AUXILIARY STEAM BATTLESHIPS

position was carefully reconnoitred; the rocket battery, the existence of which was unknown to the enemy, was landed and mounted upon the opposite side of the river, facing the heaviest battery of the enemy, and, on the morning of the 4th June, the squadron weighed and proceeded to face the batteries. Both the ships and the rocket battery were superbly handled, and under their fire the whole of the merchant convoy, with the exception of four, were enabled to pass the forts. These four grounded, and Hotham was forced to burn them, to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy. Although every one of the steamers and more than three-fourths of the convoy were repeatedly hulled, not a single man in the fleet was either killed or wounded. Thus ended the series of war operations; and although the negotiations that followed reversed the policy that dictated the seizing of the *Parana* (even the guns taken at Obligado were restored), yet the brilliant victory at Obligado, and the superb skill in navigation shown throughout the whole of the operations, added one more leaf to the laurel wreath of the British Navy.

In the New Zealand war of 1845–46 and in the Kaffir war of 1851–52, the Navy contributed much

to our success by the landing of naval brigades that did splendid service; and again in the Burma war of 1852–53, not only did the Navy take part in the shore operations, but the ships both of the Royal Navy and of the East India Company aided materially in the captures of Martaban, Rangoon, and Bassein.

The second Burmese war had hardly closed before the peace of Europe, which had not been seriously disturbed since 1815, was again to be broken.

Both England and France considered that their interests in the Near East were being endangered by Russian ambitions that aimed at enabling her to become virtually the controller of the destinies of the Turkish empire. In July of 1853 the Pruth was crossed; and the territories of the Porte, which have since become the kingdom of Roumania, were invaded by the Russian army. In October the English and French Mediterranean fleets passed the Dardanelles and anchored off Constantinople as a protest against Russian action. On the 1st November Russia made formal declaration of war; and, on the 30th, a Russian squadron, comprising six ships of the line, two frigates, and some smaller craft, entered the harbour of Sinope, and, without

even summoning them to surrender, practically annihilated a Turkish squadron of frigates and smaller vessels lying in that anchorage. No quarter was given; some four thousand men were sent to their doom within two hours and a half; and the news of the massacre was carried to Constantinople by the one solitary Turkish frigate that escaped from the disaster. War had been declared; and it was not so much the unpreparedness of the stroke, but its absolute mercilessness, that sent a thrill of horror and indignation throughout Europe. In January 1854 the British and French fleets passed the Bosphorus. Their instructions, as stated by Lord Clarendon, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Lord Aberdeen's ministry, were that, "Although with no hostile designs against Russia, it is essential that the combined fleets should have the command of the Black Sea." Russia withdrew her Black Sea fleet under the shelter of the guns of Sebastopol, and on the 28th March the allies formally declared war against Russia. As the allied fleets in the Black Sea were on the spot, naval operations first began in these waters. Odessa was bombarded, its forts silenced, and the greater part of Russia's most important port in the Black Sea destroyed. Without the slightest

attempt at naval resistance, Russia abandoned the Black Sea to the allies, sinking her ships in the approaches to Sebastopol, so as to prevent their capture by the enemy, and to block the sea entrance of the great fortress to the allied fleets. The command of the sea was abandoned to the allies, and they were left unopposed to effect the transport of a force for the invasion of the Crimea. The carrying from Varna to the Crimea of twenty-four thousand English, twenty-two thousand French, and eight thousand Turks, was the first work that devolved upon the Navy. On the British fleet of some ten sail of the line, two frigates, and a few small steamers, the safety of this Armada depended. For, in reality, the French war vessels were being used as transports, and were so packed with troops and stores that for fighting purposes they were useless. The Russian fleet had not at this time been sunk, and there lay in Sebastopol fourteen fine battleships and four frigates. Had they but dared to emerge and give battle, they might have played havoc with the convoy, and so rendered impossible the invasion of Russian territory; but the opportunity was not seized: the army was landed on the open beach in Kalamita Bay, the battle of the Alma was fought

and won, and the Russians in despair withdrew into Sebastopol and sunk their warships in the channels of entrance. The position, therefore, was such that for the Navy there was no work to be done in combating the ships of an enemy, but only to afford all the assistance that lay in their power to the forces operating on shore. On the 17th October the guns on shore were ready to open on the Russian fortifications, and the fleet was called upon to co-operate by a seaward bombardment of the Sebastopol forts. The bringing of ships against strongly armed and well-situated land fortresses is not, as a rule, attended with great success, and so it proved in this case. Owing to the confined waters, the ships could not keep moving, but had to anchor to attack. Their position could be accurately located, and the Russian gunners were offered superb targets. Many of the batteries, moreover, were, on account of their height, unassailable by the ships. The inshore squadron, under the command of Sir Edmund Lyons, who flew his rear-admiral's flag in the *Agamemnon*, suffered the most. Our losses amounted to forty-four killed and two hundred and sixty-six wounded, whilst the French had some two hundred casualties. Several of the ships of both powers were disabled. On the other

hand, some of the Russian fortifications suffered considerable damage. Their casualties were considerably in excess of those of the allies; and amongst those who fell was Admiral Nakhimoff, the perpetrator of the Sinope massacre. For the remainder of the war the naval operations were confined to a strict blockade of the Russian fortress, a very successful raid on the Russian supply bases in the Sea of Azof, and the contribution of a large naval brigade that did yeoman's work in the trenches alongside of the land forces employed. It will be seen therefore, that as far as the Black Sea was concerned, the Navy had little function beyond being an auxiliary to the forces employed on shore; but Russia had another fleet, and was vulnerable to sea attack in the Baltic as well as in the Black Sea. There she had a powerful fleet, her greatest arsenals; and, to attack these, a large fleet, under the command of Sir Charles Napier, was got together. It comprised nineteen sail of the line, the great majority of which were screw steamships, eleven frigates, and a number of sloops and smaller craft, the frigates being screw ships and the bulk of the smaller craft paddle vessels. This noble array sailed for the Baltic on the 11th March 1854; the Queen, in the little yacht *Fairy*, leading the fleet to

sea, and bidding them "God speed" on their errand. The orders to Napier were stringent. He was to bring the Russian fleet to action, if it would come out, to blockade the Russian ports, to do all the harm in his power to Russian commerce; but he was "by no means even to contemplate the possibility of attack on Sveaborg or Kronstadt or to risk the fleet in a desperate enterprise." This squadron was reinforced by a French screw 90-gun battleship, the *Austerlitz*; and, later, further French reinforcements joined in the shape of eight sailing line of battleships and some frigates and smaller vessels. The main strength of the Russian fleet, comprising eighteen ships of the line with many smaller craft, had taken shelter under the one thousand guns that armed the great fortress of Kronstadt, which faces St Petersburg at the head of the Gulf of Finland. Another portion of it was at Sveaborg; and from the shelter of these fortified positions it was impossible to get the Russians to emerge. After reconnoitring, Napier decided that both Kronstadt and Sveaborg were too strong to be attacked; but it was determined to effect the capture of Bomarsund, a strong fortress situated on the main island of the group known as the Aland Archipelago, that lies in the entrance of the Gulf of

Bothnia. By August a French military force had arrived, and was landed, as well as a naval brigade from the British fleet; and, on the 13th, the combined land and sea attack on the fortress commenced. In four days the forts had surrendered, and Bomarsund was ours. The fortifications were demolished and the place destroyed; and, important as the conquest was, it was achieved with a minimum of loss, for the casualties amongst the naval brigade on shore amounted only to two killed and seven wounded, whilst the losses in the fleet were even smaller. Throughout the whole year Napier had, over and over again, complained of the deficiencies that were in his fleet. He was short of men, guns, gunboats, mortars, and supplies of all kinds; his *personnel* was inefficient, and only partially trained; in fact, the long peace had as usual induced lethargy, and the fleet had been allowed to fall into a condition of unpreparedness for war. In October the blockade of the Gulf of Finland was practically abandoned, and in December Sir Charles returned to England. Despite the fact that he had done all that was required of him, had adequately carried out the orders that were given him, had made the best of deficiencies both in material and *personnel*, the nation and the Admiralty were disappointed,

and the admiral was severely criticised. That Sveaborg had not been destroyed seemed to be the principal cause of dissatisfaction. The admiral was offered the order of the G.C.B., an honour which he declined, and he never was again employed afloat. Naval events for the year, however, were not absolutely confined to the waters of the Baltic and Black Seas. In the far north waters of the White Sea a little squadron, under Captain Ommanney, had heavily cut up trade in Russian waters, and had done other very material damage to the enemy. The great Russian northern port of Archangel was too strong to be attacked, for not only was it strongly fortified, but under the protection, moreover, of a powerful flotilla of gunboats. Kola, however, a town at the entrance to the White Sea, and thirty miles up the river of the same name, which previously no ship had ever endeavoured to penetrate, was bombarded and destroyed, Captain Lyons taking his 15-gun corvette, the *Miranda*, up the river for that purpose, a most plucky and sporting feat of arms, which was accomplished without the loss of a man on our side. Prior to this, moreover, the same gallant captain had completely destroyed the Russian batteries on the Island of Solovetski, at the entrance to the Gulf

of Onega, both the *Miranda* and the *Brisk*, a little screw steamer that accompanied her, having to fight a very sharp action, in which, however, their loss was but of the most trifling. In the Pacific, also, a small combined French and English squadron attempted operations on the Kamtchatkan coast, on the Russian naval base of Petropaulovski. These, however, resulted in complete failure, mainly owing to causes outside of control. The French admiral was old and in feeble health; and the British commander, Rear-Admiral Price, on the very morning that all preparations for the attack on the Russian batteries was completed, was seized with sudden madness and committed suicide. The command devolved on Sir F. Nicholson, senior British captain, but the whole business was mismanaged. A battalion of seven hundred seamen and marines landed to attack, were ambushed, lost twenty-six killed, had many prisoners taken, and many wounded. The French had similarly suffered; the attack was abandoned, and the allied squadrons recrossed the Pacific to San Francisco.

Early in 1855 operations were again undertaken in the Baltic; and by the end of April a fine fleet, somewhat larger than that which had composed Sir Charles Napier's command, was assembled in

those waters, under the command of Rear-Admiral the Hon. R. Dundas, and this was later reinforced by a small French squadron, under Admiral Penaud. Again, however, Kronstadt, which had been still further protected by the approaches being sown with the rude mines of the period, was found too strong for attack; the Russian fleet, partially dismantled, refused to emerge from the safety of the harbour, and so, after various minor operations, a determined attack on Sveaborg was undertaken in August. This great fortification lies on a cluster of five islands, all heavily fortified, and separated by narrow and difficult channels. It protected the harbour and town of Helsingfors, from which it lies three miles distant. Owing to the difficulties and shallowness of the approaches, the big ships, on account of their deep draught, were unable to take part in the action, which was entrusted to the small craft, and notably a number of mortar-boats, with which both French and English had been supplied. The whole of the operations were most successfully carried out; and, after a bombardment of forty-five hours, the whole of the fortifications were a heap of ruins, the arsenal with all its stores and magazines irreparably destroyed, and the loss inflicted on the enemy was enormous. On the side of the allies

not a man was killed and but sixteen wounded. Helsingfors, where only the property of peaceful citizens could be attacked, was rightly spared, and the destruction of Sveaborg closed the naval operations in the Baltic. Soon after the small craft and sailing vessels were despatched to England, and, by the first week in December, Admiral Dundas and the steam vessels of the fleet were *en route* for home.

Allusion has already been made to the operations in the Black Sea, or, to be more correct, in the Sea of Azof, which so successfully destroyed the Russian supply bases that fed Sebastopol; and these operations gave occasion for a series of gallant exploits and demonstrations of personal valour that formed a brilliant chapter in the history of the Navy, but to detail them at length would occupy more space than is at our disposal. The whole series of operations occupied a period from the 25th May to the 9th September; and so useful and important were they deemed that, to the crews of the ships engaged in them, a special clasp, inscribed "Azof," was given with the Crimean medal. Sebastopol fell on the 8th September; and the only further naval operation of the war, before peace was proclaimed in the following spring, was the attack on

the fortress of Kinburn on the 17th October 1855. Kinburn lies at the extremity of the spit of land that forms the south shore of the Bay of Kherson, and is the fortress that defends that important town on the Dnieper as well as the estuary of the River Bug, some forty miles up which is the important naval dockyard of Nikolaief. For the attack on Kinburn the British force mustered comprised six ships of the line, nine steam frigates, and a large number of sloops, gunboats, and mortar vessels, together with troops to the extent of about four thousand. There was also a small French contingent, and it is on this that the main interest of this operation centres, for it comprised the three first ironclads that were ever used in naval warfare. Allusion will be made to them later, when the evolution of the fleet during the Victorian Era is under consideration. It will here suffice to say that they played no small part in the successful bombardment of Kinburn, and proved that the day of the wooden walls was waning to its close. Solid shot failed to penetrate them, shell burst on their iron-plated hulls, and they admirably proved the foresight of the Emperor Napoleon himself, at whose instigation they had been brought into being.

The Crimean war had hardly closed when trouble

again arose in the Far East, where the Chinese had for some time been systematically ignoring and breaking the terms of the treaty which had been concluded at the close of the war of 1839–42. Remonstrances addressed to the Chinese officials having been found to be useless, Mr H. Parkes, our consul at Canton, and Sir John Baring, our plenipotentiary, applied to Rear-Admiral Sir Michael Seymour, then commanding the naval force on the China station, to compel redress from the Chinese. In October of 1856, the river forts that protect the approaches to Canton were captured, and Canton itself entered; but as the force at Sir Michael Seymour's command was but small, the possession of the city was abandoned, and the Bogue Forts, which gave complete command of the river, and the trade of the city, captured and held. Meanwhile, light draught gunboats were asked for from home and troops from India. But no events of importance took place, until, in May, the desired gunboats commencing to arrive, the admiral determined to attack, with all the lighter craft and boats of his fleet, the Chinese main flotilla in Fatshan Creek. The position the enemy held was an excessively strong one. There were batteries on both banks; and fifty junks, moored side by side, commanded

with their heavy bow guns the whole stream. The Chinese fleet consisted of some eighty war junks, mounting more than eight hundred pieces of ordnance, many of them being European made 42-pounders, and manned by six thousand picked braves. The attack was made at 3.30 a.m., on the morning of 1st June 1857; and Sir Michael Seymour himself led in the *Coromandel*, being followed by eleven other gunboats, some fifty odd boats, the *personnel* of the flotilla mustering some two thousand men. The *Coromandel* had hardly entered the creek, and was less than a mile from the hill on which the heaviest of the batteries was located, when she took the ground, whereupon he transferred to his galley, and joined the boats under Commodore Elliott, whose crews were landed; and the battery, which mounted nineteen heavy guns, stormed, and taken with only a very trifling loss. The grounding of the *Coromandel* was but the beginning of a series of similar disasters, for, with the solitary exception of the *Plover*, every one of the dozen gunboats grounded sooner or later; but, as the probability had been foreseen, the boats they were towing had been ordered to hurry on by themselves. This was done, and the boats pushed on with all despatch, joining the division under

Commodore Keppel, whose orders had been to enter the creek as soon as the hill battery had been captured. The advance was now made on the junk fleet, the boats being led by Commodore Keppel. But at long range the Chinese fought well, and, as Yonge describes the action, "they received him (Keppel) with a fire whose rapidity and precision exceeded anything that our men had yet encountered in China." Major Kearney, Deputy Quartermaster-general, who had accompanied the boats as a volunteer, and Mr Barker, a very promising young midshipman of the *Nankin*, were killed. Captain Cochrane's gig was disabled, and he himself had the sleeve torn from his arm by a grape shot. In fact, nearly every boat was hit, many of them frequently, and the fire was so heavy that Keppel drew back his boats to reform. Shouts of triumph and the beating of gongs proclaimed the exultation of the Chinese. But with the gallant Keppel it was but a case of *il faut reculer pour mieux sauter.* Reinforcements had come up, and the attack was at once renewed with redoubled vigour; and in a quarter of an hour the junks under sail, and using sweeps, were in full retreat up the river, with our boats in hot pursuit. Of the great Chinese fleet, but eight alone reached Fatshan, where five were

taken. The other three only escaped because they could not be fired on without the risk of destroying the town of Fatshan. This, as it was unfortified and ungarrisoned, the admiral had given orders should be spared. Despite the heavy fighting, our losses were comparatively small—thirteen killed and forty wounded. The boats, however, had suffered severely, many, including Keppel's own galley and the launch of the *Calcutta*, the flagship, having been sunk. So disheartened were the Chinese that the war in all probability would have quickly terminated, had it not been for events in India. The great Indian Mutiny had broken out, and, to assist to quell it and save India for the Empire, the troops *en route* from England were diverted to India, and in addition, Sir Michael Seymour at once despatched reinforcements to the Hooghly. These were the *Shannon*, a fine 50-gun steam frigate, commanded by the gallant Captain Peel; the *Pearl*, a 21-gun steam corvette, Captain Sotheby; and the *Sans-Pareil*, 80, Captain Key, the latter of which had also on board a force of the Royal Artillery. The squadron arrived in August, and the *Sans-Pareil* was the first ship of the line to navigate the shallow and intricate waters of the Hooghly since the days of Clive and Watson.

She, moreover, was of a size greatly superior to any that had before attempted the dangerous navigation. Key's men were landed to garrison Fort-William, releasing the regular garrison for service with the army in the field; but both the men of the *Shannon* and the *Pearl* were at once formed into naval brigades for service up country. Peel's brigade from the *Shannon* comprised four hundred and eight blue-jackets and marines; and this little force with, amongst other ordnance four 8-inch, 65 cwt. guns, was joined a month later by Lieutenant Vaughan, with a hundred and twenty men, whom he had recruited from the merchant shipping lying in the river. The *Shannon's* brigade at first garrisoned Allahabad, Peel himself being in command of the city; but before long they were in the field, and by the end of October they had taken part in a brilliant action in which over four thousand rebels were utterly routed by a British force of not six hundred. Peel himself, during the course of the action, succeeded to the command by the death of the military officer in charge of the operations. Soon after, Peel and his merry men joined Sir Colin Campbell, in time to share in all the glory of the relief of Lucknow. With their heavy artillery, and being trained gunners, they were of the utmost

utility to the force; and in despatches Sir Colin speaks of their "bringing up their heavy guns with extraordinary gallantry within a few yards of the Shah Nujjeef, to batter the massive stone walls. It was an action almost unexampled in war; and Captain Peel behaved very much as if he had been laying the *Shannon* alongside an enemy's frigate." For nearly a year the historic "*Shannon's* brigade" shared in the hottest fighting of the Mutiny, returning to Calcutta in the following summer, when the Mutiny had been practically crushed and their services no longer needed, but without their heroic leader. At the capture of the *Dilkoosha*, March 1858, Peel had sustained a severe musket wound in the thigh, from which he was gradually recovering when carried off by an attack of small-pox on 27th April 1858. Captain Sotheby's brigade rendered equally gallant service in other parts of the theatre of operations. The force this officer took into the field with him numbered two hundred and fifty men, with field guns; and when, in January 1859, Brigadier-General Rowcroft, in whose command they were serving, bade them adieu on their return to their ship, he said to them, "The successes we have gained are mainly due to your courage and gallantry."

As the menace of the Indian Mutiny lessened it was possible to again resume operations in China, and now with allies, for the French force, under Admiral Rigault de Genouilly, was to co-operate with the British under Admiral Sir M. Seymour and General Van Straubenzee. French missionaries had been murdered, and compensation for the outrage and punishment of its perpetrators arrogantly refused. Canton was the first objective of the allies, and towards the end of December all was ready for the attack. The *Actaeon* and *Phlegethon*, with a squadron of French and English gunboats, were to bombard the town from the river. The land forces comprised eight hundred regulars and a naval brigade of one thousand five hundred and fifty men; whilst the French landed a similar, but somewhat smaller, brigade. On the 28th the bombardment of the city commenced, the landing of the troops and naval brigades going on at the same time, and by the close of the day a strong battery to the east of the town was in our possession. At daybreak the attack was resumed, and the final assault was made with such brilliant success that by nine o'clock of that morning the whole of Canton was completely in the grip of the allies, and Commissioner Yeh a prisoner in their hands.

This great triumph had been obtained with a loss to the whole force employed of only one hundred and thirty killed and wounded, more than half of the casualties being in the British Naval Brigade.

Amongst those who perished was the gallant Captain Bate of the *Actaeon*, who was killed whilst reconnoitring to arrange for the assault. At a council, where the difficulties facing the Naval Brigade had been emphasised, Bate's reply was, "I have always been taught there is nothing the Navy cannot do"; and as the visitor enters the great hall at Osborne, the "quarter-deck" where the cadets fall in for prayers, divisions, quarters, and all parades, this glorious motto is the first thing that faces him. So day by day it is before the cadets, and its spirit permeates the whole system of their training.

After the capture of Canton and the destruction of its forts, Lord Elgin sent in our final demands to the Chinese Government. These were treated with the usual evasion and arrogance; and it was resolved, therefore, that they should be pressed home either at Tientsin or in the capital itself. A move was therefore made by the fleet to the Peiho. Owing, however, to weather conditions, the season proving severe and the monsoon unusually late, it

was well into May before the allies were ready to commence operations. The Chinese had sent a Commissioner to Taku, the town which gives the name to the powerful forts that protect the mouth of the Peiho and guard the road to Pekin. Lord Elgin, acting in conjunction with the French representatives, gave six days' grace to the Chinese, and then, receiving no satisfaction, the diplomats transferred control of the proceedings to the admirals. At eight o'clock on the morning of 20th May 1858, the English and French flag-captains took in a peremptory demand for the surrender of the forts; and to this, no answer being returned, the attack was at once proceeded with, Admiral Seymour shifting his flag from the *Calcutta* to the gunboat *Slaney*, where the French admiral joined him, the flags of both admirals flying together at the masthead of the little vessel. The task before the allies was a difficult one, for the works were of a most formidable character. Both banks were heavily fortified, the forts mounting in all one hundred and forty heavy guns, besides several hundred gingals, and in their rear were entrenched camps occupied by picked troops that had been hurried down from Pekin. In front of all was a boom composed of five 7-inch cables, and

the river sides were heavily staked to prevent the possibility of landing. To the *Cormorant*, a small 6-gun steamer, was allotted the honour of breaking the boom, a feat performed by Commander Saumarez in gallant style, he steering the ship himself, his crew prone on the decks to avoid the terrific fire that assailed them. The *Cormorant*, disregarding the forts on the south bank, turned her attention to those on the north, and was followed through the gap by the *Nimrod*, a similar vessel, which at once engaged the southern forts. After them came four French gunboats, two proceeding to the aid of the *Cormorant* and two joining the *Nimrod*. For an hour the Chinese stood well to their guns, but their forts crumbled under the fire of the allies, delivered at a range of only four hundred yards, and with such accuracy that never a shot was wasted. In an hour and a quarter the batteries were silenced, and the landing parties pushed off for the shore. The Chinese in the camps, however, had no stomach for more fighting, and made no further resistance to the capture and dismantling of the forts. The capture of the Taku Forts was complete, and two hours had sufficed to place the whole of the defences in the hands of the allies, and this with a loss of only twenty-one

British and sixty-seven French killed and wounded. The road to Tientsin was open; to it were conveyed the French and English ministers and admirals; and there, on 26th June, was signed a treaty, the most important provisions of which provided for the residence of a British Minister at Pekin, and secured to all British subjects the right to travel unhindered throughout the whole of the Chinese empire.

The treaty of Tientsin formed for Sir Michael Seymour a brilliant termination to a particularly strenuous command. His allotted period of three years had passed; and in April 1859, at Singapore, he met and handed over his command to Rear-Admiral James Hope, who had earned a high reputation as Captain of the *Firebrand* at Obligado. The latter proceeded at once to the Peiho, his flag flying in the *Chesapeake*, 51, and having with him the *Highflyer*, 21, *Cruiser*, 17, *Magicienne*, 16, three 6-gun sloops, and nine 4-gun gunboats, every vessel in the fleet being a steamship. His object was to announce to the Chinese authorities at Taku the impending arrival of our ambassador; and indirectly, as we now were beginning to learn something of Chinese methods, to reconnoitre so as to be prepared if again force was necessary. And

so it proved, for the admiral's messenger was refused permission to land, and a very short reconnaissance showed that the wily Celestial had utilised the twelve months that had elapsed since the signing of the Tientsin treaty by enormously strengthening the defences to the entrance of the Peiho. After fruitless negotiations, the British Minister, Mr Bruce, a brother of Lord Elgin, with the concurrence of M. de Bourboulon, the French Ambassador, who had arrived in the French corvette, *Du Chayla*, to accompany the British Minister to Pekin, gave instructions to the admiral to force the entrance of the river. The task was one of enormous magnitude, and, despite the valour shown by our seamen, it failed lamentably. The forts had now been protected by enormous double dykes, the sides of which bristled with sharp wooden spikes. The channel had been sown with iron stakes, tripod in shape, and each weighing several tons, and so disposed that their spiked points were only two feet below the high-water level. In the centre of the forts was a boom, this time of iron, as well as hempen cables, and above this again two enormous rafts were moored *en échelon*, so as to block the channel by only leaving a passage so narrow and tortuous as to be practically impassable to anything

in the shape of a ship. It is unnecessary to go into the details of the fight. The channel was forced, but our ships suffered heavily in so doing. The *Plover*, in which the admiral had hoisted his flag, was first disabled in her machinery, the commander killed, and the admiral wounded. In fact, only nine of her crew escaped uninjured. The admiral, despite his wound, shifted his flag to the *Opossum*, in which he continued to direct the fight until she also was disabled, he again being wounded. His flag was then hoisted on the *Cormorant*, to which ship he was brought in a boat from the French corvette, and, from a cot slung on her upper deck, he continued to conduct the operations. In all, five of the gunboats were disabled by stranding, two only being recovered by great exertions, the other three having to be abandoned. We had, however, greatly silenced the fire of the forts; and, late in the evening, a brigade of marines and seamen, with a small body of seamen from the French corvette, was landed as a storming party. Despite heroic efforts, it was not till some three hundred had fallen that the order for retreat was given. The attempt had failed disastrously. The Chinese fought as they had never done before; and the dykes, under the awful fire poured

upon our men, proved insurmountable obstacles. Darkness fell, and it was after midnight before the survivors of the shattered landing parties found refuge in their ships. It was on the occasion of this action that the gallant Captain Tatnall, of the American man-of-war *Toeywan*, threw neutrality to the winds and came to the succour of men of his own race fighting against a barbarous and merciless foe. "Blood," said he, "is thicker than water," and proceeded to convert the sentiment into action. When the admiral was wounded he visited him as he lay in his cot in the *Cormorant*, at some risk, for, as he ran alongside the sloop, his coxswain was killed and his boat sunk under him by the enemy's fire. And, again, when the landing was being effected he stood into the river with his ship, and it was his boats that conveyed more than one of our landing detachments to the shore. In the whole disastrous action we had lost nigh a hundred killed and three hundred and fifty wounded; and, on the 3rd of July, the squadron repaired to Shanghai, there to await the necessary reinforcements that were being hurried out from England, India, and France, to teach China once and for all that treaties were not made to be violated, and that in her dealings with

Western Powers western methods must be observed. Twelve months later the operations were resumed, but the share taken in them by the Navy was, if useful, yet but small as regards the fighting. The further operations were of a purely military character. On the Navy fell the labour of conducting the disembarkation of the troops; and when the allied forces captured the Taku Forts, 21st August 1860, four of the gunboats co-operated in attacking the lower forts, but without the loss of a single man. The boats of the squadron also materially aided the army in the conveyance of its stores and siege train in the advance on Pekin, which was entered on 13th October, the final treaty of peace being signed on the 24th of the same month. During the period here under review many of the causes that have transmuted the Navy of "Wooden Walls" into that of "Steam and Steel" had come into being, but this transition can best be dealt with consecutively in the chapter that follows.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NAVY OF STEAM AND STEEL

In the years we are now to pass under review there is but little of purely naval story to record, although the period is perhaps the most important in the whole history of the Royal Navy. And for this reason. It is almost entirely within it that the Navy has undergone its evolution from the era of wood and sail to that of steam and steel. It will, however, be more convenient to deal with this great change later, and first briefly sketch the actual naval events of the period. In almost every campaign in which the nation has been engaged the Navy has taken its share, and Naval Brigades have almost invariably landed and fought side by side with their brethren of the junior service. In the New Zealand war of 1860–66 the Navy took an active part, more especially in the later years of the long drawn-out conflict. In the two severest actions of the

campaign, those in which the *Rangariri Pah* and the *Gate Pah* were stormed, the Naval Brigade were prominent.

Four years later in Abyssinia, in 1868, the Navy again rendered yeoman service. It is true that but a small Naval Brigade was landed, but it would be difficult to overrate the services that the Navy rendered in the landing of the expeditionary force from India, which comprised nearly 12,000 troops, 4000 of them being British, and some 14,000 camp followers. The small brigade that actually shared in the march to Magdala was comprised of eighty-three men with twelve 12-pounder rocket tubes in two batteries. This brigade was under the command of Commander Fellows, of the *Dryad*, and in the fight in which King Theodore's troops were completely defeated outside Magdala, and which brought the campaign to an end, it was the rocket fire of the blue-jackets that forced the Abyssinian gunners to abandon their guns, which a day or two afterwards were quietly taken possession of by three officers and eight men. As giving some idea of the transport labours that entailed upon the Navy, it may be stated that 235 sailing ships and 94 steamers were engaged in the transport of the expedition. Besides the troops and followers

THE FIRST BRITISH SEAGOING IRONCLAD, H.M.S. *WARRIOR*

1863

36,000 transport animals had to be disembarked, of which nearly 6000 were camels. The re-embarkation, however, presented nothing like as much difficulty, for the vast mass of the unfortunate transport animals did not survive the arduous campaign. Only 7500 had to be re-embarked, and of the thousands of camels only 80 survived to return to India.

The next campaign in which the Navy took part was the Ashanti War, 1873–4. When the fierce and warlike savages of King Coffee crossed the Prah early in 1873 and swept the Fanti country with fire and sword, both the towns of Elmina and Cape Coast Castle, with such Europeans as were in them, were in very serious danger. Luckily the *Barracouta*, Captain the Hon. E. R. Freemantle (now Admiral, G.C.B., C.M.G., and Rear-Admiral of the United Kingdom), was on the spot, and the Navy was able to materially reinforce the detachment of the 2nd West Indian Regiment and the few Houssas that garrisoned Cape Coast Castle. The enemy were driven back with considerable loss; and Elmina, the native inhabitants of whom had joined the enemy, was bombarded and burnt. In July, Commodore Commerell, V.C., arrived from the Cape, and at the same time the 2nd West India Regiment from Barbadoes, and the force of 110

marines and party of seamen that had been landed were now reinforced by a Naval Brigade of 400 men. From July to December the whole brunt of defending the coast and keeping the enemy in check fell upon the ships and the Naval Brigade and a few native troops on shore. Early in October Sir Garnet Wolseley arrived from England and assumed military command, and in December the expeditionary force, comprising the 42nd Highlanders, 23rd Welsh Fusiliers, and 2nd Rifle Brigade commenced to arrive. When, in January 1874, the final advance to Coomassie was begun, a Naval Brigade of some 250 officers and men accompanied the troops, and Commodore Hewitt, V.C., went with the brigade. This brigade assisted the Royal Engineers in the bridging of the Prah, took part in all the arduous fighting throughout the advance, and entered Coomassie to share in the destruction of the town. Of the 250 petty officers and men that composed the brigade, 95 per cent. were at one time or another on the sick list and no less than 39 per cent. were invalided to England. Of the brigade, Sir Garnet Wolseley wrote in his despatches: "All fought throughout the campaign with the dashing courage for which seamen and marines are so celebrated."

Although out of proper chronological order, it will be here convenient to allude briefly to the various operations in which the Navy has been engaged during the many minor expeditions that have opened up, and merged into the Empire enormous territories in West, East, and Central Africa. Some of these arduous operations have been carried out entirely by the Navy, whilst in others the fleet has participated in conjunction with local troops. To enumerate in detail the expeditions which have been undertaken during the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the first five years of that on which we have now entered, is unnecessary, but throughout the last quarter of a century few years have passed in which the Navy has not been called upon to aid in services of this character. The operations have always been land warfare comprising severe bush fighting in the most malarious and unhealthy climates. In many of these operations, however, there has been much boat and river work, for which the blue-jacket has naturally a greater aptitude than the land-trained soldier. In one and all, whether carried out by the Navy alone, or in conjunction with other forces of the Crown, the result has invariably been complete success. In these short campaigns there has

never been any of those unfortunate "disasters" of which we occasionally find record in the military history of the country. The Navy when acting in the capacity of land troops has never suffered an Isandhlwana or a Maiwand.

After the Ashanti War, the next portion of the Empire where the services of the Navy were requisitioned was in the Malay Peninsula. The native Sultan of Perak had attacked the British residency, tore down the Union flag, and murdered Mr Birch, the resident. A corvette and three gunboats from the China station were soon on the scene, and in November 1875 a Naval Brigade was landed to co-operate with the small force of troops that had been sent up from Singapore.

If the fighting was not of the severest, the climatic and geographical conditions that ruled were of the most trying. There was much river work in muddy streams in which oars were almost useless, and the heavily-laden boats had to be poled for days under a broiling sun and through a steaming, malaria-reeking jungle, very often against a current running at four knots an hour. Fresh food was very scarce; it rained unceasingly, and land marches had often to be made through marshes where the men sank waist deep in mud and

AN EARLY TYPE OF SEAGOING TURRET SHIP,
H.M.S. *THUNDERER*

1877

water. The campaign was, nevertheless, carried through to a completely successful conclusion. The Sultan Ismail was attacked and defeated with heavy loss, and for weeks harried through the jungle until he surrendered, in March 1876, and was sent as a prisoner to Singapore. To quote from the despatches: "The rapidity of the successes of the various expeditions was owing mainly to the special and professional aid given by the Naval Brigade as rocket and gun parties, and in fitting and managing the country boats, which alone could be used."

Scarcely a year after the Perak expedition the Navy was again employed ashore, and for several years Naval Brigades participated in the fighting that took place in South Africa between the years 1877 and 1881. In the campaign against the Gealikas and Gaikas, 1877–8, small Naval Brigades with rocket-tubes and guns accompanied each column, and the *Active*, flying the broad pennant of Commodore Sullivan, steamed along the coast and maintained communications with the troops as they advanced.

In the campaign against Cetewayo in 1879, the Navy landed in some force. A brigade of 170 seamen and marines with two 7-pounders, a Gat-

ling, and two rocket-tubes, accompanied Colonel Pearson's column in its advance to Etchowe, and were of the utmost assistance in getting the column, with its 2055 Europeans and 2350 natives and 100 waggons, across the Tugela River. In the fight at Inyezane, the Naval Brigade with their rockets checked the rush of the Zulu impis who retired, leaving 300 dead on the field. On the next day the column reached Etchowe, and the news came to Pearson of the terrible disaster of Isandhlwana, deciding him to entrench and hold his position until reinforcements reached him. It is interesting to note that the Royal Navy was represented at Isandhlwana, for there was in the camp a signalman of the *Active*, who was attached to the Staff. He was last seen with his back against a waggon wheel using his cutlass with the utmost vigour against the Zulus, until one of the enemy creeping up behind assegaied him through the spokes.

There was another Naval Brigade composed of men from the *Shah*, *Tenedos*, and *Boadicea*, that accompanied the force which, under Lord Chelmsford, defeated the Zulus at Gingilhovo, and the next day, 2nd April, relieved Etchowe. The *Shah*, indeed, had been on her way home to England, but on arriving

H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES' FIRST COMMAND,
TORPEDO BOAT 79

1889

at St Helena had heard of the Isandhlwana catastrophe. Captain Bradshaw, her skipper, acted at once with that quickness of decision and acceptance of responsibility that is so characteristic of the naval officer. He knew that no reinforcements could arrive, and that there was every probability that the Zulus might invade Natal, so, without any waiting for orders, he proceeded at once to return to Durban. His opportune arrival and the landing of seamen and marines gave, naturally, increased confidence to the colony. In June the Naval Brigade, now numbering nearly 800 men, joined Crealock's division and again crossed the Tugela; they, however, saw no more active service, as they were encamped at Port Durnford and so were seventy miles off when the decisive battle of the campaign was fought at Ulundi. They, however, were of great service in landing stores from the transports that had arrived at that place, a work of very great difficulty on account of the heavy surf that almost constantly breaks on the shore. In July the men rejoined their ships, but not before Sir Garnet Wolseley had himself personally inspected them and given them most cordial thanks, afterwards embodied in general orders, for their services throughout the campaign. In the

dire contest in the Transvaal in 1881 the Royal Navy was represented by a small brigade which shared in the hard fighting at Laing's Nek and the terrible disaster of Majuba.

In the following year the Navy was to undertake the first purely naval operation for which it had been called upon since the Russian war. This was the bombardment of Alexandria, 11th July 1882. Arabi Pasha, who headed the military revolt against the Khedive, was determined to drive the hated foreigner from the country. The Suez Canal, the highroad to our great Indian Empire, was threatened. Riots had broken out in Alexandria; many Europeans had been killed, hundreds were seeking shelter on the shipping in the harbour, and the town had been handed over to pillage.

A combined English and French fleet lay in the outer roads, the senior British officer being Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour, who flew his flag in the *Alexandra*. Noticing that Arabi was hard at work strengthening the fortifications, erecting new batteries, and being constantly reinforced by fresh troops of the mutinous Egyptian army, he sent in an ultimatum, that, unless work on the fortifications ceased, and the batteries were for the time handed over to the

THE LAUNCH OF A BATTLESHIP


NORMAN W. KINNAIRD

force he was prepared to land, an immediate bombardment would follow. The French fleet, acting under orders from Paris, were not allowed to co-operate, and had, indeed, left the roadstead before the delivery of the Admiral's ultimatum. Arabi, paying no attention to the Admiral's demand, the British fleet cleared for action, and by daybreak of the 11th the ironclads had taken up the positions assigned to them.

The forts at Pharos, and the batteries and fortifications known as the Ras el Tin batteries, that lie on the spit of land that runs almost due north from the town and forms the harbour, were opposed by the most powerful of the battleships, the *Sultan*, *Alexandra*, *Superb*, and *Inflexible*. To attack the powerful Fort Mex and Fort Marsa, and the heavy batteries that lie to the westward of the town, the Admiral took in his lighter-draught battleships, the *Monarch*, *Invincible*, and *Penelope*, with in support of them the *Temeraire*. With this division was the Admiral, who had shifted his flag from the *Alexandra* to the *Invincible*, as her light draught of water enabled him to thus control operations from the inside line of the attack.

At half-past six in the morning the action commenced by the *Alexandra* plumping a shell

into Fort Ada, lying between Fort Pharos and the Ras el Tin batteries, and in a moment the engagement became general. The gunboats *Bittern*, *Condor*, *Decoy*, *Cygnet*, and *Beacon* were told off to act as repeating ships, and lay behind the inshore squadron in which the Admiral's flag was flying. Well to the westward lies Fort Marabout, which, with its heavy 10-inch guns, was able to very considerably annoy the inshore squadron. Of the gunboats the *Condor* was commanded by Commander Lord Charles Beresford, and although the heaviest gun in his ship was but a 64-pounder, Beresford decided to engage the fort and endeavour to keep its fire under. His enterprise was as coolly and skilfully calculated as it was plucky. He saw that he could, by skilful handling, so manœuvre his ship that while it would be difficult for the huge weapons in the fort to be so depressed that they would bear directly on the *Condor*, yet she with her shells and machine guns could operate with deadly effect against the men handling the Egyptian guns. For an hour and a half, single handed, the little ship effectually drew off the fire from the inshore squadron, until the other gunboats were sent in to her aid, and soon the little flotilla, following Beresford's tactics, had silenced

A CRUISER ACTION OFF THE SCILLIES

Manœuvres, 1901

Fort Marabout. Then from the *Invincible* ran up the historic signal, "Well done, *Condor*!" and a salvo of cheers from ship after ship showed that the whole fleet had seen and were delighting in Lord Charles Beresford's feat of pluck and seamanship. Meanwhile, after two hours of action, the inshore squadron had blown up Fort Marsa, and disabled all but four guns in Fort Mex and the contiguous batteries. By noon the forts running from Pharos to the lighthouse at Ras el Tin had been practically silenced by the fire of the outshore squadron, and by two o'clock the whole of the fortifications had ceased to fire and were apparently abandoned by the enemy.

Under the command of Lieutenant Bradford of the *Invincible*, accompanied by the Hon. Hedworth Lambton, flag lieutenant of Sir Beauchamp Seymour, a boat from the *Invincible*, covered by the gunboats, pushed for the shore. On landing, they found only the dead in the forts, the guns of which were either blown up by gun-cotton or spiked. The action was over, and by half-past five in the afternoon the ships had drawn off from the shore and anchored for the night. None of the enemies' projectiles had pierced the armour of our ships. The *Invincible*, *Inflexible*, and *Penelope* had suf-

fered a good deal of damage, and the *Sultan* and *Superb* had also been several times struck, but the ship that suffered most was the *Alexandra*. The *Temeraire* and the *Monarch* escaped practically with no damage. One incident is worth recording. A 10-inch shell penetrated the side of the *Alexandra* and lay with fuse burning on the main deck when Mr Israel Harding, the gunner of the ship, rushed up from below, seized the live shell and plunged it into a tub of water—a heroic act which probably saved a great loss of life, and well earned for Mr Harding the decoration of the Victoria Cross, which, as a pensioned chief gunner, he still survives to wear.

During the night the town was seen to be in flames, the evacuation by Arabi's troops having left the riff-raff of the town free to plunder and burn the commercial quarter, liberate all the convicts, and massacre every European they could find. Early the next morning a force of 700 seamen and marines with machine guns was landed, and to Lord Charles Beresford was entrusted the duty of clearing the place of thieves, rioters, and incendiaries. Beresford was given a free hand, and in forty-eight hours after he assumed the command on shore, order reigned in the devastated city of the

A TRAINING BRIG

1902

Ptolemies. Some score of incendiaries and pillagers were shot by order of drum-head court martial, and Beresford's blue-jackets and marines were as successful in extinguishing the flames of the burning town as they were in dealing with looters and marauders; and the captain—Beresford had been promoted to Post rank for his gallantry in the bombardment—was at leisure to use his powers of organisation in the creation of a police force and the re-establishment of civilised social conditions.

Order re-established in Alexandria, and the troops that were to carry out the campaign against Arabi pouring in from England and India, the naval operations were, of course, finished; but when Sir Archibald Alison assumed command at Alexandria there were left at his disposal a battalion of 1000 marines, commanded by Colonel Tuson (now General Sir H. B. Tuson, K.C.B., of the Royal Marine Artillery), and a force of 200 seamen under the command of Captain Fisher of the *Inflexible* (now Admiral of the Fleet, Sir John Fisher, O.M., G.C.B., and first Sea Lord). This latter small body of blue-jackets is of special interest, for it was they who manned a completely new instrument of modern warfare. This was

the armoured train devised by Captain Fisher, whose genius for organisation has since practically reconstituted the Royal Navy. Besides sand-bag protection, the waggons that composed the train and the engine were protected by two inches of armour plating, and this moving fortress mounted one 40-pounder Armstrong, a Nordenfeldt, and a brace of Gatlings. There were also working with the train a small body of blue-jackets manning a little field battery of two 9-pounders. The British troops had by now, and unopposed, taken possession of and fortified Ramleh, some six or seven miles from Alexandria and about the same distance from Arabi's entrenched position at Kafrdowar, and when, on 5th August, General Alison made a reconnaissance in force against Arabi's position, it was on the blue-jackets, who, with their armoured train, covered both the advance and the retirement of the troops, that the brunt of the fighting fell. In the sharp skirmish that took place the enemy showed a bold front, but were completely routed with heavy loss, the casualties amongst the blue-jackets amounting to two killed and twenty-four wounded.

When Sir Garnet Wolseley arrived from England on 15th August, he decided to make

A ROYAL ESCORT

Arrival of the King of Portugal

the advance against Arabi from Ismailia, and the base of operations was shifted from Alexandria to the Suez Canal. On the 19th, Captain Fairfax of the *Monarch*, with 500 seamen and marines, occupied Port Said, whilst Captain Fitzroy with his men of the *Orion* on the following day occupied Ismailia. Meanwhile, Admiral Sir William Hewitt, V.C., with his flag-ship *Euryalus*, and one or two other of the ships under his command on the East Indies Station, had occupied Suez. In all the engagements that preceded the decisive action of the campaign, Chalouf, Tel-el-Mahuta, and the two actions at Kassassin, blue-jackets and marines had their share. By 12th September the whole expeditionary force was assembled at Kassassin, and at nightfall the force moved out on the eight-mile desert march which was to end with the storming of Arabi's entrenched position at Tel-el-Kebir at daybreak on the morning of the 13th. It was Lieutenant Rawson, naval aide-de-camp to Sir Garnet Wolseley, who, guiding the force and steering only by the stars, led with absolute accuracy the Highland Brigade, which headed the column, to the very point of the enemies' entrenchments where the General wished the storming attack to be made. Rawson himself was amongst

the first to enter the position, only to fall mortally wounded between the first and second lines of entrenchment, and, as Lord Wolseley wrote of him in his despatches, "No man more gallant fell on that occasion." As regards the part that the marines and blue-jackets played in the actual action, it was an important one. The marines were with Graham's brigade on the right and in the front line of the attack, and suffered terribly. Two officers and three men were killed, and fifty-four officers and men wounded. This loss was greater than that of any other battalion engaged with the exception of two both belonging to the Highland Brigade, on which the brunt of the fighting had fallen. The blue-jackets, with six Gatling guns, were on the left of the attack with the Indian contingent, and escaped without casualties. A seaman contingent also did useful service in the manning of an improvised armoured train fitted with a 50-pounder gun, which operated from the railway that flanked the left of the attack. Tel-el-Kebir finished the campaign, and on 17th September the Naval Brigade returned to Ismailia and rejoined their ships.

When the Mahdist occupation of the Soudan again entailed British intervention in the affairs

H.M. FIRST-CLASS CRUISER *BLENHEIM*

of Egypt, the Royal Navy, throughout 1884–5, figured prominently in the expeditionary forces that operated around Suakim, and that followed the Nile route to Khartoum too late, alas! to save Gordon from his martyr's death. Naval Brigades and marine battalions of considerable strength shared in the heavy fighting around Suakim in 1884. At El-Teb, 29th February 1884, the Navy was represented by a brigade of 13 officers and 150 seamen with six machine guns, and a battalion of 400 marines. It was in this action that Captain A. K. Wilson (now Admiral of the Fleet Sir A. K. Wilson, V.C.) won his Victoria Cross, and, in general orders after the action, Sir Gerald Graham, after complimenting the brigade on their cheerful endurance when suffering from heat and scarcity of water, their ready gallantry and steadiness under fire, added: "The Naval Brigade contributed materially to the success of the action, and the general officer commanding cannot too highly express his thanks for their services." At Tamai, a fortnight later, when for a moment the rush of the splendidly valorous Dervishes broke the British square, the Naval Brigade suffered heavily, losing in all 5 officers and 86 men killed and 8 officers and 103 men wounded.

For the Gordon Relief Expedition a Naval Brigade was formed at Dongola, whilst the marines furnished a contingent to form a camel corps, and, naturally, the services of the former were of the greatest assistance in transporting men and stores up the river and getting the boats over the cataracts. When the desert column, under the command of the gallant Herbert Stewart, pushed off from Korti on its desert march to the relief of Khartoum, the marine camel corps were brigaded with that of the Guards, and a small Naval Brigade of 58 officers and seamen, with Lord Charles Beresford in command, also formed part of the force. This latter little band suffered heavily at Abu Klea. At the moment of the Dervish rush, with the enemy not two hundred yards from its muzzle, their solitary Gatling jammed, and in the few minutes' terribly hard fighting that followed, 2 officers and 6 men of the brigade were killed and 7 wounded.

After the Nile had been reached at Gubat, the Naval Brigade was strengthened by the arrival of a second detachment of 6 officers and 50 petty officers and men; and it was this little body of not much over a hundred that, with some picked men from the mounted infantry, two Gardner guns, and

some Egyptian howitzers, manned the *Safia*—the little "penny-steamboat" in which Beresford went up the river to rescue Wilson, whose steamer had grounded when returning after ascertaining that Khartoum had fallen.

The story of the *Safia* is almost as historic as that of the *Condor*. The little steamer had to run the gauntlet of a strong Arab earthwork mounting several guns, above which Sir Charles Wilson's steamer lay on the rocks. As they passed at about a hundred yards distance, a well-directed fire into the embrasures of the earthwork kept down the fire of the enemy's guns; but when some two hundred yards beyond, a lucky shot from the Arab battery pierced the boiler of the *Safia*. Beresford at once ran the steamer towards the opposite bank, anchoring some five hundred yards from the earthwork. Till nightfall a steady fire from the *Safia* poured into the embrasure that faced up the stream, and kept the big gun of the Arabs from being used; but a continuous hail of bullets poured on the little packet despite the fact that Sir Charles Wilson's men, who marched down the right bank of the river and halted opposite the steamer, had opened with two guns and rifles on the earthwork. As soon as it was dark

the steamer ceased firing; the Arabs concluded the vessel had been abandoned, and during the night Mr Benbow, the chief engineer, began the repair of the boiler, a difficult task which took ten hours to accomplish. The next day Sir Charles Wilson and his party were picked up, and the steamer returned to Gubat. In the return march to Korti across two hundred miles of desert not a man of the brigade fell out, and on 8th March, the day after their arrival, the brigade was inspected by Lord Wolseley, who gave them the highest praise he could bestow. Mr Benbow was specially complimented by the General, who presented him with his own cigarette case as a memento and recognition of his gallantry and ability, which was later officially recognised by his receiving the decoration of the D.S.O.

The Naval Brigade on the Nile was then broken up, but Lord Charles Beresford retained his post as naval aide-de-camp on the staff of Lord Wolseley, and proceeded with him to Suakim. Here a Naval Brigade and marines had been employed under Sir Gerald Graham in the tough fighting that took place around Suakim in March 1885, notably at "McNeill's Zareba," officially known as the battle of Tofrek. In this action the Naval

A COUNTY CRUISER CLEARED FOR ACTION

Brigade had one officer and six men killed and many wounded. In May, after the arrival of Lord Wolseley, the Soudan was for the time definitely abandoned, and the Naval Brigade returned to their respective ships. Later, in 1888 at Gemaizah, and in 1890 at Tokar, Naval Brigades aided the land forces in repulsing Arab pressure on Suakim.

This latter was the last action in the Soudan in which officers and men of the Royal Navy took part until, in 1896, Lord Kitchener, as he was to become, finally crushed the thraldom of the Kalifa and restored the Soudan to Egypt and civilisation. Throughout the long series of operations that lasted from April 1896 to February 1899, a Naval Brigade commanded by Commander Colin Keppel, son of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Keppel, the hero of Fatshan, manned the flotilla of gun-boats that operated on the Upper Nile, and were of the most material assistance to Lord Kitchener and the army he commanded.

When, in 1899, the stress of the greatest war that the British Empire has ever had to face came upon us, it is hardly saying too much to state that the ultimate success which awaited us in that mighty conflict was due in no small measure to the Navy. It was owing to our absolutely assured sea

supremacy that no European power—and most, if not all, were in sympathy with the Transvaal and the Orange Free State—dared to intervene in the conflict. It was the Navy, and the Navy alone, that enabled us for three long years to place more than a quarter of a million men in the field; to pour in all the masses of stores, munitions of war, and transport that were necessary for their upkeep as an army; and to maintain the reinforcements that the drainage of war rendered necessary. No other nation in the world could, for this lengthy period, have carried on a war of such magnitude at a distance, and that over seas, of 7000 miles from its base. Never in all our history have we had such an important object lesson of the vital importance of the Navy to the British Empire. From the start to nearly the finish of the long drawn-out war, bluejackets and marines fought side by side with their comrades of the land forces in the field. It is no exaggeration to say that it was the Navy that at the outset of the campaign saved us from such crushing disaster as might have altered the whole course of the war. At the commencement of the fighting the British artillery was hopelessly out-ranged and outclassed by that of the Boers, who were able to bring at once into the field large-calibre Krupp

CRUISERS MANŒUVRING


NORMAN WILKINSON

and Creusot guns, against which our light field and horse artillery stood no chance. If it had not been for the fact that the Navy were able to take their heavy guns, even to a calibre of 4·7 and 6 inches, ashore, and bring them into use in the field on cleverly improvised carriages, our troops could never have coped with the Boer artillery, Ladysmith would have fallen, and the Boers would have been able to have swept unchecked to the sea. To tell the story of the actual work of the Naval Brigades would be to tell the story of the war for, at any rate, the first two years of its continuance, and is not within the scope of these pages, for it belongs to the military and not the naval history of the Empire. It will, therefore, be sufficient to briefly outline the phases of the campaign in which the Navy shared materially.

It was on 7th October 1899 that the Army Reserves were called out, and, two days later, the insulting Boer ultimatum forced war upon us. On the 12th the enemy's commandoes were across the Natal frontier, and the struggle had begun in bitter earnest. A day later the ubiquitous Navy was turned to, and the fleet at Simon's Bay was busy landing its contingent for the fray. This, the first Naval Brigade to be landed, comprised 9

naval officers and 53 blue-jackets, with a marine battalion of 7 officers and 290 non-commissioned officers and men. The whole was under the command of Commander Ethelston of the *Powerful*, with, as second-in-command, Major Plumbe, R.M.L.I., of the flag-ship the *Doris*. It was this little contingent, later to be very considerably reinforced as the magnitude of the task that lay before us became developed, that formed the nucleus of the naval forces that joined the troops on the western line of operations, and that eventually accompanied the Army to Bloemfontein, Pretoria, and finally round to the Portuguese border-line on the eastern coast. It was not long before the Navy had its chance to show that it was well capable of living up to its old traditions. At the battle of Graspan, 25th November 1899, the Naval Brigade were chosen to lead the attack, which they did with superb intrepidity and complete success, but not without suffering heavily. Out of a strength of 5 officers and 190 men in the one company of "Blue" and the two of "Red" Marines that were in the firing line, 2 officers and 9 men were killed, and 1 officer and 72 men wounded, of which 11 were non-commissioned officers, a percentage loss of 44. The blue-jackets

BATTLESHIPS STEAMING AT NIGHT WITH ALL NAVIGATION LIGHTS OUT

had but one small company of 55 men in the firing line (the remainder of 50 men being employed in working the 12-pounder guns that accompanied the brigade), and out of this they lost 2 officers and 2 men killed, and 1 officer and 5 men wounded, a percentage of 18·1. Of the little band first landed Commander Ethelston, Major Plumbe, R.M.L.I., Lieutenant Senior, R.M.A., and Midshipman Huddard were killed, and Lieutenant Jones, R.M.L.I., severely wounded. Of those who joined later, Captain R. C. Prothero of the *Doris*, who, by virtue of his rank, had superseded Commander Ethelston and was in command at Graspan, was severely wounded. Further detachments were subsequently landed, and from that time onwards the Navy shared in all the vicissitudes of the campaign both in the Cape Colony, Orange Free State, and Transvaal. Perhaps one of the most strenuous pieces of work done by the Navy was the performance of a section under the command of Commander Grant of the *Doris*, which, with two "four-point-sevens," marched over a thousand miles, including a seventeen days' chase of De Wet. In the De Wet chase "Grant's guns," as they were known throughout the Army, covered 250 miles in fifteen consecutive days, giving an average of

16·7 miles a day. There were two marches of 37 miles, the one being accomplished in thirteen hours, the other taking twenty-five hours. "Grant's guns" were in action on twenty-five occasions (counting Paardeberg, which extended over eight days, as one fight), and in all fired between 500 and 600 rounds. During the whole period of employment of this little typical contingent of the Royal Navy, never once was it found necessary to bring a man before the commanding officer "for any crime, neglect of duty, slackness, or any other offence whatsoever, and this for a period of nearly nine months"—a record that speaks volumes for the superb service to which the men belonged. On the Natal side the story of the Navy's share in the war is equally glorious. When Sir George White's appeal for naval guns came, it was the *Powerful* that carried them to Durban, and landed the crews that took them up country to fight them. That they were available was due to Captain Percy Scott, now Rear-Admiral Sir Percy Scott, K.C.V.O., C.B., whose ingenuity had devised a mounting that enabled the long 12-pounder, the 4·7-inch, and even the 6-inch to be used as field guns. Durban was reached on 29th October, and by five o'clock that afternoon a Naval Brigade.

A COAL HULK

The *Pitt*, now broken up

under the command of Captain the Hon. Hedworth Lambton (now Vice-Admiral Hon. Sir Hedworth Lambton, K.C.V.O., C.B.), was entraining for beleaguered Ladysmith. With them they took up two 4·7 Q.F. to be mounted on wooden platforms, three long 12-pounders (12 cwts.) on "Percy Scott" field-carriages, one short 12-pounder (8-cwt. naval field gun), and four maxims, three on field-carriages and one on a tripod stand. With the usual luck of the Navy, the contingent arrived at the very moment it was most badly wanted. As they detrained, the Boer 6-inch, after to become celebrated throughout the siege as "Long Tom of Pepworth Hill," was hurtling 94-lbs. shell close over the railway station, and in a very brief time the long 12-pounders were in action, and with such accuracy that at a third shot, at a range of between 6000 and 7000 yards, "Long Tom" was temporarily silenced, for that day at any rate. As Sir George White said to Captain Lambton, the Navy's opportune arrival with their long range guns had saved the situation. And it was those same long range guns that enabled the gallant garrison to hold out for the weary months that were to follow. In all, the brigade that Lambton took up to Ladysmith

with him numbered 17 officers and 267 men, but it was augmented after arrival at Ladysmith by 2 officers, one a retired lieutenant, the other a lieutenant, Royal Naval Reserve, who happened to be in the beleagured city. Of this little band 1 officer and 5 men were killed or died of wounds, 1 officer and 4 men were wounded, and 2 officers and 25 men died of disease. As in Ladysmith so with Buller's relieving force, the Navy and their heavy guns were a tower of strength, and figured in every action from Colenso onwards. To the relieving force the Royal Navy contributed 39 officers and 403 men, and this contingent was later augmented by 2 officers and 50 men of the Natal Naval Volunteers, and the artillery they were able to bring into action comprised one 6-inch and two 4·7-inch on travelling carriages, two 4·7-inch on platform mountings, one 4·7-inch on a railway truck, and 18 long 12-pounders on travelling carriages. The following figures afford striking proof of the splendid work done by that portion of the Royal Navy that came actually into the first fighting line during the Boer War. In all, 113 officers (including those of warrant rank) were landed with Naval Brigades, and of these no less than 44 were decorated or promoted for their

H.M. BATTLESHIPS *KING EDWARD VII.* AND *QUEEN*

services. Six received the Companionship of the Bath; 8 the Distinguished Service Order; 6 the Conspicuous Service Cross; 20 officers received a step in rank, and 4 were noted for early promotion. Of the 33 "Middies" who served with the Naval Brigades, the majority were all recommended for early promotion on qualifying for the rank of lieutenant. In addition, there was, of course, the splendid work done at the bases, notably by Captain Percy Scott, who, in addition to designing the gun-carriages that enabled the Navy to take their heavy guns into the field, filled, from the beginning of November 1899 to the end of March 1900, the very responsible and onerous post of commandant of Durban.

When, in the early part of 1900, the anti-foreign agitation in China came to a head, it was to the fleets of the powers that the legations at Pekin and all Europeans in China looked for aid and succour; and in affording them this aid and eventually saving them, the greatest Navy in the world naturally took the foremost part. By the end of May the ships of Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany, the United States, Italy, and Japan were concentrated at the mouth of the Pei-ho; and on the 31st an international force of 18 officers and

389 men, of whom 79 were British marines, had reached Pekin to act as guard to the foreign legations. Ten days later an international Naval Brigade, some 2000 strong, had concentrated at Tientsin, the whole being under the command of Vice-Admiral Sir E. H. Seymour, K.C.B., British commander-in-chief on the China Station (now Admiral of the Fleet Sir E. H. Seymour, G.C.B., O.M., G.C.V.O., LL.D.). Of this force half was British, for our contingent was 915, viz., 62 officers, 640 seamen, and 213 marines, the Naval Brigade being under the command of Captain J. R. Jellicoe, flag captain to the commander-in-chief (now Rear-Admiral J. R. Jellicoe, C.B., C.V.O.), and the marines under Major J. R. Johnstone, also of the flag-ship the *Centurion* (now Lieutenant-Colonel J. R. Johnstone, C.B.). A push for Pekin to relieve the besieged legations was at once made; but the fact that the Chinese Imperial troops openly connived with the Boxers, and joined in the destruction of the railway lines, made the failure of the attempt inevitable, and the force had to fall back on Tientsin, which it reached on 26th June, after severe fighting, in which the allies lost 65 killed and 230 wounded, the British casualties amounting to 30 killed and 97 wounded.

PORTSMOUTH HARBOUR

Meanwhile the fleet had not been idle. The intensely critical character of the situation, and the fact that the Chinese were endeavouring to mine the mouth of the Pei-ho, led to an ultimatum which demanded that the Taku forts should be surrendered to the allies by 2 a.m. on the morning of the 17th, failing which forcible seizure would be made. Owing to the shallow waters at the mouth of the Pei-ho—the draught on the Taku bar is only twelve feet—the allied fleet were moored some twelve miles out at sea, and so the big ships could take no action against the forts. The attack upon these, therefore, devolved entirely on the small craft. This little flotilla comprised the British sloop *Algerine* and destroyers *Fame* and *Whiting*, and five gunboats, the Russian *Koreetz*, *Giliak*, and *Bobr*, the German *Iltis*, and the French *Lion*. These ships carried on board, in addition to their ordinary crews, 900 men from the allied fleet—of which 320 were British, under the command of Commander Cradock of the *Alacrity*—and took up their position inshore. The Chinese reply to the ultimatum came shortly after midnight on the 17th, in the shape of a vigorous shelling of the flotilla. The senior naval officer was Captain Dobrovolski of the Russian Navy; and, under the

concerted plan of operations arranged, the officer chosen to command the landing parties was Commander Cradock of the *Alacrity* (now Captain Cradock, C.B., M.V.O.). Luckily for the allies the Chinese fire was poor, and a large proportion of their shells failed to explode, though the Russian ships *Koreetz* and *Giliak*, and the German *Iltis* had a fair number of casualties. At the very outset of the action the *Fame* and *Whiting* had weighed, and promptly captured four Chinese destroyers that were moored alongside the Government dockyard. By 2.30 a.m. the allied forces forming the storming party had landed, and the attack was delivered by 4.30 a.m., the guns of the enemy having been by that time sufficiently silenced. By 7 a.m. the flags of the allies were floating over the captured forts, their total casualties, both in ships and storming parties, numbering only 138, of which but 14 were British. The Chinese had suffered heavily, for no less than 450 dead were found in the forts. This was the only naval action of the war; for from henceforth till the ultimate entry into Pekin on 14th August the campaign was a purely military one, though one in which the Naval Brigades serving in the field played no small part.

H.M.S. *ALBEMARLE* ALONGSIDE THE RAILWAY JETTY, PORTSMOUTH


Norman Wilkinson

The events of 1900 are the last war service in which the fleet has up to date shared, and it remains now only to briefly chronicle the marvellous evolution that the Navy has undergone during the Victorian era. The changes that have taken place may be conveniently grouped as follows :—

As regards propulsion—

(*a*) The supersession of sails by steam power.

As regards construction—

(*b*) Wood as a material superseded by first iron and then steel.

(*c*) Protection by armour introduced.

As regards ordnance—

(*d*) The rifling of guns.

(*e*) The adoption of breech-loading ordnance.

(*f*) The adoption of the torpedo.

To even outline the progress of each of the above six changes will show the extent of alteration the Navy has undergone in a period that may be put roughly at half a century. To begin with the supersession of sails by steam, it is true that this transformation commenced much earlier than the period actually under review in this chapter, but the most important phases of the development took place within that period. We have seen how,

as far back as the Burmese War of 1824–26, steam propelled vessels were used as ships of war, but it was not until the screw propeller replaced the paddle that sails finally gave way to steam. It is easy to understand how paddle steamers were not much in favour, for, on account of the interference with the broadside fire of a ship, paddle propulsion practically limited a ship's armament to bow and stern guns.

The screw was first experimentally tried, as far as the Royal Navy is concerned, in 1842; and when the *Erebus* and *Terror*, that composed Sir John Franklin's expedition to the Arctic in 1845, left England, each ship was fitted with a screw. By the time of the Crimean War the screw for large ships was firmly established, though even then many of our line of battleships were sailing vessels, and it was not until 1859 that it was officially declared that "sailing ships are unfit for active service." Masts and sails, however, were still regarded as absolutely essential to all sea-going ships, and this remained so until sail power disappeared entirely in the turret ships of the "seventies." For broadside ships, however, sail power still continued for some years. As late as 1893 the writer can remember a central-battery

H.M.S. *VICTORY*. EVENING

battleship of the *Iron Duke* class in the fleet that was concentrated for the annual manœuvres of that year, asking permission to spread sail to enable her to keep station, as her steaming power was not equal to the speed the admiral in command had ordered. She was, I believe, the sole battleship left in the Navy with masts and spars. All the others had had their sailing masts removed and pole masts with fighting tops fitted. Twin screws, now universal, were first proposed in 1860, and first fitted in the *Penelope*, one of the smallest of our ironclads that was completed in 1868. To-day turbine-driven engines have completely replaced the older type, and have come to stay, for every ship now constructing for the Navy, from torpedo-boat to battleship, is turbine-driven. Coupled with this new departure there is also another in that all of our most recent ships are fitted for the consumption of oil fuel as well as coal.

Turning to construction, we find that the two great innovations, the substitution of iron for wood and the introduction of protective plating, may be regarded as having occurred almost simultaneously. As far back as 1812, iron canal boats had been built, and later the same material was employed in the construction of steamers for the mercantile

marine; but with the usual conservatism of the Admiralty it was not till 1845 that the first iron war steamer was built in this country. This was the *Birkenhead*, whose name is known world-wide on account of the heroic conduct of the troops and seamen that perished with her when she was lost by shipwreck in 1852. Owing to experiments in testing iron under the effect of shot, which went to show that iron vessels were not suitable for war-ships, she and one or two other iron vessels that had been built, or were building for the Navy, were turned into troop-ships. It was nearly fifteen years later, in 1859, that the two first iron war-ships, the *Warrior* and *Black Prince*, were laid down as additions to the Royal Navy. In the late seventies the change to steel came; the two first vessels so constructed being the sister fast cruisers, *Iris* and *Mercury*, laid down at Pembroke, the former in 1877, the latter in 1878. With the *Black Prince* and *Warrior* was also introduced the system of protecting the hull by vertical armour, as far as sea-going ships are concerned, for, as was mentioned in relating the story of the Crimean war, floating batteries protected by iron armour had already been proved in actual warfare. Nor were we the first in the field with an ocean-going iron-clad, for a French fine

COALING A BATTLESHIP

two-decker, originally the *Napoleon* and afterwards re-named *La Gloire*, had been completed in 1859. She, however, was a wood-built ship, and so we can claim the credit of having put afloat the first sea-going iron armour-clad ship of war. The armour used was wrought-iron, and this held place till 1875, when "compound" plates were first used in the turrets of the *Inflexible*. In these plates two-thirds of the thickness is of wrought-iron, the outer third being of steel. This gave to the plate the resistance of steel, combined with the toughness of wrought-iron. Steel alone, while it resisted penetration, was brittle, and experiments showed that plates composed entirely of this material would crack and break up. "Compound" armour ruled up to, and including many of, the ships built under the Naval Defence Act of 1889; but since then all-steel plates so chemically treated as to give them all the toughness of wrought-iron, without in any degree detracting from the power of resistance to penetration, have become universal.

With regard to ordnance, or, in other words, the offensive power of war-ships, the development has been enormous. Practically the guns that Nelson used at Trafalgar were much the same as Drake had used against the *Spaniard*, and, though more

scientifically constructed, almost similar smooth-bore guns were mounted in the *Warrior* and *Black Prince*, our first iron-clads. "Smooth-bore" guns became useless immediately armour plating was introduced; and "rifling," which had for some time been used for small arm weapons, was first adapted to big guns by Mr Lancaster, and guns built on his design were used during the Russian war, both on shore in the Crimea and on gunboats in the Baltic. From the Russian war, for thirty years, all our heavy guns were rifled muzzle-loaders, the size gradually increasing from the 6½-ton and 9-ton guns, mounted in the earlier armour-clads, till in the *Inflexible*, completed in 1881, guns of 80 tons were mounted. Breech-loading guns had been introduced, but they were found to be complicated, and unsatisfactory. Improvements in the manufacture of guns, and in explosives, forced on us the necessity of adopting the breech-loading system, which had already been extensively adopted in foreign navies; and the first heavy breech-loading guns to be used in the British Navy were mounted in the turret ship *Conqueror*, completed in 1882. Some years before the permanent adoption of breech-loading ordnance came the introduction of the automobile torpedo, a weapon now established

as much a part of naval ordnance as is the gun, and, within its limits, as reliable and as accurate. Both these weapons of aggression have developed side by side until to-day the main armament of our battleships is composed of 12-inch guns, throwing a projectile of 850 lbs., and capable of perforating 17 inches of Krupp steel at a range of 3000 yards; whilst the latest type of torpedoes can run to a range of 4000 yards at a speed of 30 knots.

CHAPTER IX

THE NAVY OF TO-DAY

In the preceding chapter the vast changes that the Navy has undergone during the Victorian period were outlined, and as a result in great measure of these changes we find that the commencement of the twentieth century is almost synchronous with the establishment of some three or four pronounced types. In the armoured ship the old and marked distinction between the battleship and the armoured cruiser has nigh disappeared. We have to-day, almost if not entirely, accepted the fact that every ship on which it is worth while to place armour should be fit to "lie in the line." In some we accept a slightly decreased power of offence and defence in return for a very high rate of speed. In others we sacrifice somewhat in speed to obtain increased power of attack and increased power of resistance; and so, as far as the "capital" ship

A RIVER CLASS DESTROYER

is concerned, we have our fighting line reduced to two types, the one a *Dreadnought*, the other an *Invincible*. In the *Dreadnought* all effort has been concentrated on endowing her with the most enormous gun power, and the most complete protection, both by armour and water-tight subdivision. In the *Invincible* a decrease in gun power and in the thickness of armour protection is compensated for by a corresponding advantage in speed.

If we turn to cruisers, the change in type is even more marked. Since the "Diadem" class of cruisers were laid down, just over ten years ago, we have, with perhaps the exception of the earlier of the "County" class cruisers, not added a single first-class cruiser to the fleet that is not well protected by armour. As our cruiser construction of late years clearly proves, we have accepted the fact that if a ship is meant to fight at all, and is not built as an auxiliary to the fighting line, she must trust either to her invisibility or her speed, or both, as in the case of submarine ships and torpedo craft, or be an armoured vessel. The result has been that the old type of big, fighting, unprotected cruiser has practically disappeared, and the new class of scout or

lookout ships, intended to be the eyes and ears of a fleet, have come into being. In the present century no cruiser that is not of the former class has been laid down, though, of course, some of the older types are still on active service. But even where this is the case, their principal work is on foreign stations, such as the East Indies, Cape of Good Hope, China, and Australia, where the possibility of their having to encounter powerful and modern ships of any enemy is reduced to a minimum.

Coming to torpedo craft, we find precisely the same tendency to crystallise down to a few accepted types. In the early eighties what was known as the torpedo gunboat came into being; then, some ten years later, the torpedo boat developed into the destroyer; and now successful invention has made the submarine not only a possibility but a necessity to every fleet pretending to be equipped for modern naval warfare. As far as torpedo boats proper are concerned, we have almost ceased to find a place for them in our Navy. In the last ten years we have added barely a dozen, and those dozen are what but a few years ago would have been styled destroyers. The twentieth-century British torpedo boat displaces just on 200

H.M.S. *ST VINCENT*

tons, has a length of 165 feet, and can steam 25 knots. Our earliest destroyers were hardly larger or speedier than these. For instance, the *Havock* and *Hornet* were only 180 feet long, of some 240 tons displacement, and of the speed of 26 knots. Torpedo craft have thus settled into four types:—the ocean-going destroyer, the coastal destroyer, the torpedo boat, and the submarine. The actual war material of the fleet may then be most conveniently classified as follows:—

I. Armoured Ships.

(*a*) Battleships.
(*b*) Armoured cruisers.

II. Scouts and Look-out Ships.

III. Torpedo Craft.

(*a*) Ocean-going destroyers.
(*b*) Old-type destroyers.
(*c*) Torpedo boats.
(*d*) Submarines.

Thus classified, the actual first line fighting material of the fleet is as follows, ships completing and building being included:—

Battleships.

4 *Dreadnought.*[1]	5 *Duncan.*
3 *Invincible.*[2]	8 *Formidable.*
2 *Lord Nelson.*	6 *Canopus.*
8 *King Edward VII.*	9 *Majestic.*
2 *Swiftsure.*	

Of the above the last four named classes all carry a battery of four 12-inch and twelve 6-inch guns; the eight ships of the *King Edward VII.* class mount four 12-inch, four 9·2, and ten 6-inch guns; the two *Lord Nelsons* are armed with four 12-inch and four 9·2-inch; the *Invincibles* carry eight, and the *Dreadnoughts* twelve 12-inch guns. Only the *Triumph* and *Swiftsure* carry 10-inch, of which each mounts four; but this weakness in their main armament is compensated for by the fact that in each ship the secondary battery is composed of fourteen 7·5-inch guns.

Armoured Cruisers.

3 *Minotaur.*	10 *Monmouth.*
4 *Warrior.*	4 *Drake.*
2 *Duke of Edinburgh.*	6 *Cressy.*
6 *Devonshire.*	

[1] Three more *Dreadnoughts* are provided for in the 1907–8 estimates.

[2] The *Invincible* class are included amongst battleships, though

DESTROYERS AT SEA

Of these, all are 23 knot ships, with the exception of the *Cressy* class, which are 21 knotters, and the *Devonshire*, *Duke of Edinburgh*, and *Warrior* classes, which are nominally 22 knotters, but, as a matter of fact, more nearly 23 knotters. The lightest armed are the *Monmouth* class, which carry only fourteen 6-inch. Their improved sisters of the *Devonshire* class mount four 7·5 and six 6-inch; the *Drake* class have two 9·2-inch and sixteen 6-inch; the *Cressy* similar, but with four guns less in the 6-inch battery; the *Duke of Edinburgh* have six 9·2 and ten 6-inch, whilst in their improved sisters of the *Warrior* class the ten 6-inch guns are replaced by four 7·5; the three *Minotaurs* carry four 9·2 and ten 7·5.

Scouts.

4 *Amethyst*.[1]
8 *Adventure*.

The *Amethyst* class are 3000 ton cruisers, with a speed of 22–23 knots, and each carries a battery of twelve 4-inch, *i.e.* 25-pounder Q.F. guns. The *Adventure* class were built as scouts and

they are officially styled "cruisers," inasmuch as they carry a heavy armament of 12-inch guns, are very powerfully protected, and intended to "lie in the line" when necessary.

[1] Officially styled "third class cruisers."

never styled cruisers, like the *Amethyst*. The eight ships are not sisters, but were built in pairs. They range in size from 2700 to 2940 tons, carry an armament of ten 12-pounder Q.F. guns, and have a speed of over 25 knots.

Ocean-going Destroyers.[1]

34 *River* class.[2]
7 *Afridi* class.
1 *Swift* class.

Of these craft, the River class, which take their name from the fact that all the ships are named after the smaller streams of the United Kingdom, were added to the Navy during the period of 1903–1905. Whilst not being exactly sisters, they are of a very similar type, varying in displacement from 500 to 600 tons. They are thus considerably larger than many of the old-type destroyers, and, though nominally less speedy, can run much closer to their maximum in a seaway than can the earlier ships. They are easily distinguishable from the older type of destroyers, which are grouped with the coastal destroyers, for in lieu of the turtle-back

[1] Five more craft of this type are provided for in Naval Estimates, 1907–8.

[2] These are not officially termed "ocean-going."

THE ENTRANCE TO PORTSMOUTH HARBOUR

forward that the other ships possess, the River class have a high forecastle. Of the *Afridi* class none are yet completed. As with the River class, these vessels are not all sisters. In them the displacements run from 765 to 893 tons. As typical of the two types, and showing the development that has within the last few years taken place in the ocean-going destroyer, the following figures are of interest:—

Name.	Length.	Beam.	Draught.	Tons.	I.H.P.	Speed.
	ft.	ft.	ft.			knots.
Boyne .	220	23½	8½	545	7,000	25½
Mohawk	270	25	8	765	14,500	33
Swift .	345	34¼	10½	1800	30,000	36

It will be seen from the above that the ocean-going destroyer has now so developed in size that it passes the dimensions of the torpedo gunboat that was, in some sense, its predecessor. Of the above vessels, the River class are armed precisely as were their predecessors, the old-type destroyer, —that is, with one 12-pounder and five 6-pounders. In the *Afridi* class the 6-pounders are done away with, the armament of five ships being three 12-pounders, and of two, two 4-inch, whilst in the

experimental *Swift* four 4-inch guns will be carried. Of the River class, only one, the *Eden*, is a turbine-driven ship, the remainder have only the ordinary reciprocating engines; but all of the *Afridi* class, as well as the *Swift*, are turbine-driven boats.

Old-Type Destroyers.

42 twenty-seven-knot boats.
70 thirty-knot boats.
24 *Cricket* class.

The 27-knot boats were built in the date 1893–1895, and range in size from 240 to 310 tons displacement. The 30-knot boats are very similar, but larger and somewhat faster, and date from the period 1896–1902. They run in dimensions from 310 to over 400 tons; and the largest of the group, the *Arab*, of 470 tons, might almost rank as sea-going. The *Cricket* class are only now approaching completion, the first batch of them having been laid down under the estimates for 1905–1906, and they were the first destroyers to be officially styled "Coastal." They are, in fact, only one remove from torpedo boats, their displacements averaging about 220 tons. Curiously enough, however, they are more heavily armed than their larger brethren

HEAVY WEATHER

the old-type destroyers, which, with one or two exceptions, have an armament of one 12-pounder and five 6-pounders, whereas the armament of the *Cricket* class is two 12-pounders to each ship. The exceptions alluded to are the first four destroyers that were built:—the *Havock*, *Hornet*, *Ferret*, and *Daring*, which have only three instead of five 6-pounders, and the *Taku*, which has only six 3-pounders. The *Taku*, it may be noted, was not built for the British Navy but for the Chinese by the German firm of Schichau of Elbing, and taken by us as a prize from the Chinese during the Boxer troubles of 1900. As typical of the various types of destroyer, and for comparison with the ocean-going class, the following are given [1]:—

Name.	Date.	Length.	Beam.	Draught.	Tons.	I.H.P.	Speed.
		ft.	ft.	ft.			knots.
Havock .	1893	180	18½	5¼	240	3500	26½
Quail .	1895	213½	21½	5¼	300	6000	30½
Albatross	1898	227½	21¼	8½	360	7900	31½
Velox .	1902	210	23	8½	440	8000	33
Cricket .	1906	175	17½	5½	235	3750	26

[1] Whilst these pages were going through the press it was decided by the Admiralty that the "Coastal" destroyers should, in future, class as torpedo boats, and bear numbers instead of names. They are now therefore "torpedo boats, Nos. 1 to 24."

Torpedo Boats.

Fifty-nine of 100 to 130 feet.
Fifteen of 131 to 153 feet.
Four of 160 feet.
Nine of 165 feet.

The armament of these vessels comprises, in the smaller, one 3-pounder and two machine guns, and, in the larger, three 3-pounders. The dimensions and date of a typical boat of each group is given below for purposes of comparison:—

Number.	Date.	Length.	Beam.	Draught.	Tons.	I.H.P.	Speed.
		ft.	ft.	ft.			knots.
76	1886	125	13	5½	75	700	20
90	1895	140	14¼	3½	100	1430	22
107	1901	160	17	8½	180	2900	25
117	1904	165	17½	8½	200	2900	25

I have, however, kept them classed with the "old type" torpedo boat destroyers, as showing how the tendency of the torpedo boat to merge into the destroyer, equally useful for delivering torpedo attack and for defending the fighting line against the same, is becoming marked. The rôle of the old torpedo boat is being usurped by the submarine, as searchlights have to a great extent done away with the "invisibility" of the former, which was not only its protection but made it the most nerve-shattering menace with which an enemy could be faced. Of this class twelve more are provided for in the Naval Estimates, 1907–8, which will bring their total up to 36.

DESTROYERS MANŒUVRING

SUBMARINE BOATS.[1]

5 Nos. 1 to 5.
13 ,, A1 ,, A13.
11 ,, B1 ,, B11.
19 ,, C1 ,, C19.

As typical of the dimensions, the following table is given :—

Number.	Length.	Tons.	Surface Speed.
	ft.		knots.
1	63½	120	10
A7	99	204	11½
B5	135	313	13

The dimensions of the "C" class are the same as those of "B." In Nos. 1 to 5 and the "A" class, the motor power on surface is from gasolene engines, the submerged power being from electric motors. In the "B" and "C" classes the motive power is electricity from accumulators.

This completes the effective first fighting line strength of the Navy, but behind it there is another line of ships, many of which are in commission on foreign stations or in reserve.

[1] Twelve more submarines are provided for in Naval Estimates, 1907–8.

Many of these, which I will call the second fighting line, are still effective, and, if somewhat obsolete, are quite as, if not even more, capable of war service as are the contemporary ships of any foreign power. The battleships of this class comprise:—

7 *Royal Sovereign.*
1 *Hood.*
1 *Renown.*
2 *Barfleur.*
2 *Nile.*

The oldest of these are the turret ships, *Nile* and *Trafalgar*, which carry an armament of four 13½-inch and six 6-inch. The *Hood* is an improved and considerably larger turret ship, with the same main armament, but with ten 6-inch guns in the secondary battery. The seven ships of the *Royal Sovereign* type are sisters to the *Hood*, but in them the main armament is mounted *en barbette* instead of in turrets, with the result that they have a much higher freeboard both forward and aft. The *Barfleur* and *Centurion* are reduced facsimiles of the *Royal Sovereign* class, but carry four 10-inch guns in lieu of 12-inch. Originally they carried ten 4·7 instead of the 6-inch, but a few years back the 4·7 were replaced by 6-inch.

H.M. CRUISER *GOOD HOPE* LEAVING PORTSMOUTH HARBOUR

The *Renown* is an improved *Barfleur*, with the same armament.

The protected cruisers comprise nineteen of the first class, thirty-three of the second, and ten of the third class. All these are fast ships, with speeds ranging from eighteen to twenty-two knots. Of the first class cruisers, two carry one 9·2-inch and twelve 6-inch; seven carry two 9·2-inch and ten 6-inch; eight carry sixteen 6-inch and two carry two 9·2-inch and sixteen 6-inch. Of cruisers of the second class, fifteen of the earliest carry an armament of two 6-inch and either six or eight 4·7-inch. All the remainder carry either ten or eleven 6-inch. Of the third class, nine are sister ships, carrying eight 4-inch guns, and with a speed of twenty knots; whilst the tenth is armed with six 4·7-inch, and is a very speedy little boat, which has done over twenty knots. Only a few years ago there was a considerable dearth of war auxiliaries in the British Navy, but under the recent vigorous administration these are now being rapidly supplied. For example, the Channel fleet has attached to it a tank ship for the supply of oil fuel, as well as a repair ship. Another large repair ship is being completed. Several of the still splendid sea-going cruisers of the first and second class have been

equipped and fitted as "mother ships" for destroyer flotillas and submarines and as sea-going mine layers, and in this important class of auxiliaries no fleet is better supplied than the greatest Navy in the world.

The Navy have now taken over the control of all submarine defences that heretofore were in the hands of the Royal Engineers, and the fleet has recently been strengthened by the addition of four second class cruisers, which have been altered and adapted for the purposes of mine laying, and are the very latest and most suitable type of vessel for this work to-day possessed by any power.[1]

The distribution of this vast force has been completely reorganised during the last few years according as political and strategic conditions have altered; and, throughout the whole of the important changes that have been carried out, the guiding motto has always been the fighting efficiency of the fleet and its instant readiness for war. The portion of the battle fleet that is always in full commission and instant readiness is stationed entirely in European waters, and grouped into three fleets. The most powerful of these is the Channel fleet,

[1] A "fast unarmoured cruiser" is provided for in the Estimates of 1907–8, and she will be equipped and fitted as a "mother ship" for torpedo craft.

with fourteen battleships, under the command of an admiral, with a vice-admiral and a rear-admiral as second and third in command respectively. The next in importance is the Mediterranean, which comprises six battleships, and is under the command of a vice-admiral, with a rear-admiral as second in command. The Atlantic fleet is similarly constituted to the Mediterranean. Broadly speaking, the Channel fleet is not only numerically the stronger, but has allotted to it the more powerful and latest types of ships, those next in power being in the Mediterranean, whilst the Atlantic fleet is composed of the less powerful, but swifter ships. The Channel squadron is based on the three great home ports, Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Chatham; the Mediterranean on Malta and Gibraltar; and the Atlantic on Gibraltar and Berehaven; and having, of course, the home ports as repairing bases, if in home waters. The latter is therefore always available to, at a very brief notice, concentrate with either the Channel or Mediterranean fleets, as may be deemed necessary. To each of these squadrons is attached a cruiser squadron of four armoured ships, the "First" to the Channel, the "Second" to the Atlantic, the "Third" to the Mediterranean fleet. Behind this battle array is a fourth armoured fleet

—the Home fleet. It contains the finest of the units that are not actively employed in the sea-going fleets; and, though all of its ships are not kept in full commission, a division of the best is. The head-quarters of the Home fleet is at the Nore; and the division there, which is in practically full commission and constantly at sea, comprises six battleships and six armoured cruisers, and these are always in complete readiness to at once fall into the first fighting line. The ships in "Nucleus" commission are based on Portsmouth and Devonport. In fact, as far as commissioning goes, no ship in the fleet has below two-fifths of its crew, including in that all the most important and skilled ratings both of officers and men; whilst the best of the units, *i.e.* the Nore division, is really in actual full commission. The Home fleet, in fact, is the immediate first reserve to the first battle line, with its finest fighting ships actually in that first line for all practical purposes. Finally, there is, never very far from home waters, another armoured cruiser squadron of three ships. This is known as the "Fourth Cruiser Squadron," and is allotted to the North America and West Indies station, though constantly in home waters. It is practically the great training squadron of the Navy, for to it, for some months'

SHIPS' BOATS PULLING ROUND THE FLEET

instructional work at sea, all young seamen are passed.

In addition to the force above described, each of the squadrons has attached to it two, three, or four of the second and third class protected cruisers.

Turning to the disposition of the fleet abroad, we find that outside of European waters there is hardly any force other than that in the Pacific. The fleet abroad is styled the Eastern fleet, and is grouped in three divisions. The most important division is that on the China station, where the squadron comprises four armoured cruisers and two second class protected cruisers. There is also a flotilla of ten river gunboats and some half dozen sloops for river service in China, and seven torpedo boat destroyers are also kept on the station. The Australian station has no armoured ships. The flagship is a first class protected cruiser, and there are three second class and five third class and a sloop on the station. In the East Indies division there are two second class cruisers and two third class. Of these three divisions the vice-admiral on the China station is the senior officer, with a commodore in charge at Hong-Kong, whilst the position of commander-in-chief on the Australian station is held by a vice-admiral or rear-admiral,

and the East Indies command delegated to a commodore.

Up to the present the Cape of Good Hope, where there are at present two second, and one third class cruiser, has been a rear-admiral's command; but probably before these lines are in print the Cape and East Indies station will have been amalgamated. Finally, two second class cruisers are attached, stationed to the fourth cruiser squadron, one for fisheries duties at Newfoundland and training the naval reserves of that colony, and the other for peace duties in the West Indies. There is also a little gunboat employed on the West Coast of Africa, which is affiliated to the Atlantic fleet, and a sloop stationed on the West Coast of North America, whose duties lie mainly in connection with the Behring Sea fisheries.

There remains only then to consider the distribution of the torpedo craft to which the "scouts" are affiliated. Of the four *Gem* class, three are attached, one to the Channel fleet and two to the Atlantic; the fourth *Gem* is the flagship of the *Torpedo Admiral* of the British Navy. As with all else in the Navy, the distribution of the torpedo flotilla has of late years undergone very great changes. The flotilla had attained to a position of

AN 18-INCH WHITEHEAD TORPEDO


N.C. WYETH

such importance that, on the 1st January 1905, the captain who had general charge of all torpedo and submarine craft in home waters, under the admiral commanding the Channel fleet, was replaced by a rear-admiral, so giving the dignity of a "flag" to the flotilla. All the torpedo craft in home waters are under the command of this officer; and this, with the exception of the seven torpedo boat destroyers already mentioned as being on the China station, and a flotilla of twelve destroyers that are stationed in the Mediterranean, includes all the torpedo craft in the British Navy. The portion of the flotilla in full commission comprises the *Gem* cruiser, which is the flagship, three of the eight "scout" class, and forty-eight torpedo boat destroyers. These forty-eight destroyers are divided into four flotillas, twelve boats in each; in each flotilla are three divisions, composed of four boats. The remainder of the destroyers are in reserve commission, with nucleus crews. The head-quarters of the whole torpedo flotilla is Portland, but, for tactical purposes, the four destroyer flotillas are based respectively on Portland, Plymouth, Dover, and Sheerness. The boats in nucleus commission, that is, with two-fifths of their crew on board, are similarly grouped into divisions of four, and so arranged

that each sea-going flotilla of three divisions has seven divisions in reserve commission at its respective port, either Portsmouth, Plymouth, or Chatham. As far as possible, boats by the same builder and of the same type are grouped together, so that not only is the question of spare parts and stores simplified, but the tactical and strategical value of boats in each group are similar. Of the torpedo boats proper, some are kept in full commission at the various home ports, some at Gibraltar and Malta, a few on foreign stations, and the remainder in commission in reserve in the home ports.

At present the submarines completed are divided into two groups, the larger group being based at Portsmouth, the other at Devonport. The Portsmouth group, however, will shortly be divided, and the submarine flotilla will then be in three divisions, basing respectively on Portsmouth, Devonport, and Dover. The whole of the submarine flotilla is under the charge of an inspecting captain of submarines, who hoists his pennant in the depôt ship at Portsmouth, and each division is under the charge of a commander. Each division has a mother ship, a converted cruiser, on the books of which are borne, and in which are accommodated, the officers and men attached to the submarines.

BATTLESHIPS MANŒUVRING

Finally, the dockyard organisation on which the sea-going fleet bases for repairs, stores, etc., may be briefly described. At the three home ports, Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Chatham, at Malta, and at Gibraltar, there are dockyards under the command of an admiral superintendent of the rank of rear-admiral, and on foreign stations there are naval shore establishments at the head-quarters of each. Of the three big dockyards at home, both Portsmouth and Devonport are big construction yards, whilst Chatham is more of a repairing depôt. There is also a dockyard at Pembroke, which formerly was a constructing yard on a somewhat large scale, but will in the future probably be made more of a construction and repairing yard for torpedo craft, especially submarines. Another large dock and minor repairing establishment is at Queenstown, in the south of Ireland.

CHAPTER X

THE MAN BEHIND THE GUN

In the preceding chapter it has been shown how the material of the Navy has been rearranged within the last few years, and in the same period there have also been very great changes in the entry and training of the *personnel.* To give a brief account of how the Royal Navy is manned, and how its *personnel* is trained, is the object of this chapter. In dealing with the *personnel*, it will be better to treat them in three groups—seaman ratings, engineroom ratings, and, lastly, officers.

The seaman ratings of the Navy are recruited from lads who enter as "boys" between the ages of 15¾ and 16¾, or youths who enter between 16¾ and 18. By far the larger number, however, enter as "boys." When a boy enters he joins either the shore training establishment at Shotley, in Suffolk, officially known as H.M.S. *Ganges*, or the *Impregnable*, boys' training ship at Devonport.

The shore establishment at Shotley has, in fact, taken the place of the old training ships that used to be at Queensferry, Harwich, Portland, and Portsmouth, whilst the *Impregnable* takes the lads from the west of England, one of the largest recruiting grounds for the Navy. Ireland has her own small training establishment in the shape of the *Emerald* at Queenstown. Boys entering must be of good character, and have the written consent of parent or guardian, and in no case are boys who have been in prison or reformatories received. Industrial school boys, if of very good character, can be entered, but only under the special permission of the inspecting captain of the boys' training schools. Practically, allowing for three weeks' vacation, the boy's stay at Shotley, or in the training ship, covers eight months, in which he goes through a twelve weeks' course of school and seamanship instruction, four weeks of mechanical training, and twelve weeks of military training, *i.e.* field exercises, battalion drill, heavy field and machine gun drill, etc. Youths go through a much shorter training, as they have only three months in the hulk attached to the training establishment at Shotley before they are drafted to the fleet. All who enter are, on leaving the training establishment,

engaged to serve for twelve years, at the end of which time they can re-engage to serve for another period of ten years, and so put in their full time for pension. Large numbers do so re-engage; and of late, to augment the creation of a reserve, a proportion of men wishing to do so are allowed to take their discharge, and join the Royal Fleet Reserve, before completing the twelve years for which they have engaged. On leaving the training establishments the lads do not at once pass to ships of the fleet promiscuously, but all have to go through a further period of three months in one of the cruisers of the particular service squadron. This squadron is, in fact, the sea-going training squadron of the whole fleet; for, to complete their training, there are passed to it, not only all those who enter the service on the lower deck, but the cadets that are to be the officers of the future. The seaman's training is, however, by no means finished when he has passed from the training squadron and become rated as an "ordinary seaman" or an "able seaman." He has to complete his training by passing through the gunnery and torpedo schools, one of which of each class is established at each of the three home ports. The gunnery course is compulsory for all, but only selected volunteers who intend to specialise as

GUNBOATS PRACTISING AT SPITHEAD

torpedoists go through the torpedo course. The principal gunnery school of the Navy is Whale Island, at Portsmouth, the others being H.M.S. *Cambridge*, at Devonport, and the Sheerness Gunnery School. It is from the men who obtain first-class certificates at their gunnery school that the higher ratings in gunnery are selected, and all those so selected go through an extended course at Whale Island. In fact, the importance of Whale Island lies in the fact that at this school, not only all the more highly trained of the lower deck ratings receive their instruction in gunnery, but also it is the school at which all officers learn their gunnery. Similarly, at each port there is a torpedo school:—H.M.S. *Vernon* at Portsmouth, H.M.S. *Defiance* at Plymouth, and H.M.S. *Actæon* at Sheerness. Of these, the *Vernon* is to the other torpedo schools what Whale Island is to the other gunnery schools.

That the Navy is pecuniarily a good profession can be shown by quoting the rates of pay. These range from £22, 16s. 3d. per annum for an ordinary seaman to £57, 15s. 10d. for a chief petty officer. But in a great number of cases the man's pay is considerably supplemented by payments made to him on account of his qualifications. For example,

the moment a man becomes a "trained man" he gets an extra penny a day; when he qualifies and becomes a seaman gunner, he gets 4d. a day, or £6, 1s. 8d. a year extra. Men who qualify for higher gunnery ratings can increase their pay by sums ranging from £9 to over £18 a year. Similarly, a seaman torpedo man gets 4d. a day extra pay; while by taking higher ratings in this branch he can supplement his pay by from £15 to £30 a year. The same applies also to men who specialise in other directions, such as signalling, etc. On promotion to warrant rank, whether as boatswain, gunner, or carpenter, the pay rises to £100 a year, increasing in proportion to length of service and promotion to as much as £273, 15s. 0d. It will be seen, therefore, that few openings in the rank of life from which the lower deck of the Navy is recruited offer such good prospects to steady and well-behaved men.

With regard to the engine-room *personnel*, this is divided into two branches, viz., stokers and engine-room artificers, which enter the service quite distinct, and pass through the service in separate organisations. Until a year or two ago stokers received no systematic and continuous training in the way that the blue-jacket received it, but of late

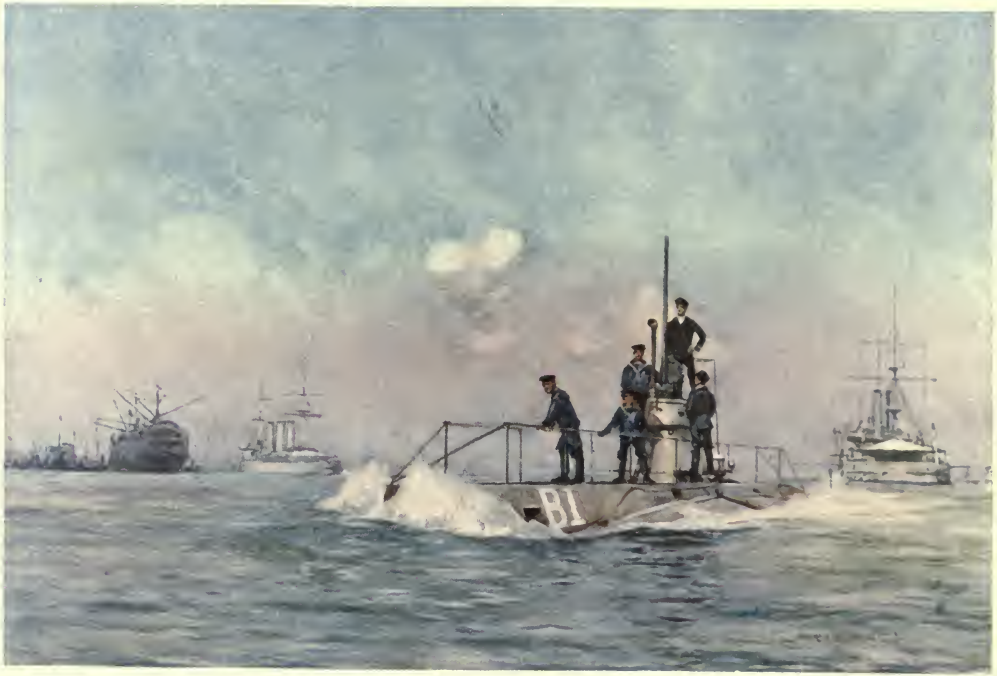
THE TEMPERLEY COAL TRANSPORTER

Portsmouth Harbour

all that has been changed. Now the men are trained regularly and continuously in their duties from date of entry, and a warrant rank has been created and thrown open to the class. On entry the stoker has a spell at the depôt, receiving there his physical and setting-up drill, rifle and field exercises, etc., and next a period in the stokers' training ship at his home port before passing to sea as a second-class man. At sea he receives more training from his engineer officers, and, before being rated as first-class, has to pass an examination, to prove that he is a good fireman and generally skilled at his work, including also some knowledge of the principal tools in ordinary use. From the first-class stokers the best are picked, and are put through a course of attending in turn all classes of auxiliary machinery in the ship. Then if he has proved himself to have the qualities necessary in a petty officer, has put in two years as a first-class stoker, and is not within two years of completing his first period of service, he is eligible for the position of acting leading stoker. In fact, in all its aspects the career of the stoker has been so improved as to make it an exceedingly advantageous opening for smart men. It is from the stoker petty officers that the class

of mechanicians are drawn; and the course they undergo is an extremely practical one, lasting for two years, and turning out men with a thorough knowledge of boilers, handy with tools, and good all-round general mechanics. The school for mechanicians is established at Devonport, the establishment being known as H.M.S. *Indus*, and is installed in three old armourclads, all fine ships in their day, the *Defence*, *Temeraire*, and *Bellerophon*, now known as *Indus I.*, *Indus II.*, and *Indus III.* After passing through the two years' course those who qualify, and the examination is a strict one, become acting mechanicians, being confirmed in the rating after twelve months. From these men the selection of warrant mechanicians, who will be the future warrant watch-keeping officers in the engine-rooms of the fleet, will be made, the stipulations being, recommendation for a warrant, the passing of an examination, and five years' service as a mechanician, three of which must have been in a ship of war at sea. The pay of the stoker class is very much on a par with that of the military branch, stokers entering at £30, 8s. 4d., rising to £38, 0s. 5d., when rated first class, and, as leading stoker, receiving as much as £45, 12s. 6d., rising in the case of stoker petty officer of the first

A SUBMARINE RUNNING AWASH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class to £57, 15s. 10d. The pay of chief stokers ranges from £63, 17s. 6d. to £100, 7s. 6d., and that of mechanicians from £82, 2s. 6d. to £118, 12s. 6d.

Up till four years ago the artificer engineer came into the Navy direct from civil life as a trained engine-fitter, boilermaker, smith, or coppersmith, after passing an examination. This system lasted from March 1868, when engine-room artificers were first brought in as assistants to the engineer officers, until 1st January 1903, when it was determined to train the artificer in the service; and the entry of "boy" artificers began in a school at Chatham, known as H.M.S. *Tenedos*, an establishment of three hulks. In October the school was divided, a portion going to each of the other ports —Devonport and Portsmouth. Now, however, that the *Indus* establishment at Devonport is entirely taken up by the school for mechanicians, the "boy" artificers are equally divided between Portsmouth and Chatham, the Portsmouth establishment being known as H.M.S. *Fisgard*, an establishment of four hulks, which is the headquarters of the inspecting captain of all mechanical training establishments, whether for boys or men. The "boy" artificer's career commences between

fifteen and sixteen, and from the start he is no expense to his parents; for kit and bedding, to the value of £12, 16s. 0d., are provided free, and during the four years he is under instruction he receives pocket money, rising from £9, 2s. 6d. to £13, 13s. 9d. The course is conducted by officers of the engineering branch, the trades taught being those of engine-fitter, boilermaker, smith, and coppersmith; the boys also learn something of moulding, pattern-making, and the making of working sketches. Three months after entry the boys are examined, those passing highest having first choice of a trade, that of fitter naturally being the one most in favour. For his fifth year the boy passes to a sea-going ship as an engine-room artificer, fifth class, ranking with a second class petty officer, and with a wage of £54, 15s. 0d. a year; and at the end of that year he is, after examination, rated "engine-room artificer, fourth class," at a wage of £100, 7s. 6d. This rises by instalments, until as a chief engine-room artificer of the first class he can draw £136, 17s. 6d. per annum. The warrant ranks of this branch are those of artificer engineer and chief artificer engineer, and men promoted to commissions become engineer lieutenants. The

pay of artificer engineers and chief artificer engineers ranges from £155, 2s. 6d. to £248, 7s. 6d. per annum, depending on length of service and rank.

With regard to the commissioned *personnel* of the Navy, there has been up to the present date a system of separate entry for officers of the executive and those of the engineering branch; but under the new scheme of naval training, which was launched in December 1902, the principle of common early entry and common early training for all naval officers (other than the pay and medical branches and chaplains) was adopted. Prior to that, executives, engineers, and marines had all entered under different conditions at different ages, and were trained on entirely different lines. For some time entry on the old lines has ceased, and this book will hardly be in print before the first entries under the new system will be passing to sea from their training as junior officers of the fleet. It will therefore be necessary only to describe the present system of entry. The first selection of cadets is made in a novel method, the applicants having to come before a committee; and the opinion which the committee forms during their interview with the boy guides the First Lord

in the question of his awarding the nomination. Of this committee a prominent schoolmaster is generally a member, and the committee moreover is assisted by confidential reports from the boy's schoolmaster. The boys so selected have then to pass a written examination, which is scarcely competitive, but intended to exclude any who should turn out to be exceptionally backward in school subjects. It is evident that, as a modern ship of war of any sort or kind is nothing more or less than a huge engine-room crammed with mechanical contrivances of every description, the broad principle underlying all training of the naval officer must be to make him more or less of an engineer. It is necessary that the modern naval officer should be a man thoroughly familiar with the language, the ideas, and the methods of engineering; and to combine a training of this character, and yet retain the old system of early entry and sending officers young to sea, so as to, from an early age, acquire the habits of command, was the problem that faced the Admiralty. Put briefly, the cadet receives a four years' course at college, followed by six months in a cruiser, and then passes to the fleet as midshipman. Of the shore training the first two years are passed in the

S.S. *LUSITANIA* AS AN AUXILIARY CRUISER IN WARFARE

college at Osborne. When, at the capture of Canton in 1857, the difficulties of the assault were pointed out to Captain Bates of the *Actæon*, who led the assault, and perished in it, his memorable reply was, "I have always been taught to consider that there is nothing the Navy cannot do." That is the whole sentiment that underlies the training of the cadet, both at Osborne and Dartmouth, and the words of Captain Bates face the visitor as he enters the great hall of the Osborne establishment. It must always be remembered that Osborne is in no sense simply a school, although the lads are of such a tender age; it is essentially an establishment of the Navy, a ship of war in full commission, with pennant hoisted and the white ensign flying. There is, it is true, a headmaster and a large staff of assistants, with scarcely an exception civilians, though one or two are naval instructors; but the training and discipline of the naval cadets is entirely in the hands of the captain, commander, and naval lieutenants of the establishment. Moreover, not so much for training, but to use the lad to the sea, to make him feel that he is something more than a school boy, that he is an embryo naval officer, each cadet in his first term has a week's cruise in the cruiser attached to the

establishment. It is unnecessary to go into the curriculum at Osborne, but the whole teaching is not only of the most thorough character, but the boys are taught to be most intensely interested in their work. The results are that boys, when they pass at fourteen and a half from Osborne to Dartmouth, are as far advanced in mechanics and hydrostatics as a lad of seventeen would attain to under ordinary conditions, and in mathematics have reached to the solution of plane triangles. In the workshops that are attached to the establishment, elementary instruction in the handling of tools and machines is as *perfect* as instruction in the studies ; and practical knowledge both in mechanical studies and seamanship is obtained in the two instructional steamboats and the torpedo boat that are attached to the college. After two years at Osborne the cadet passes to Dartmouth, where the same system of training is followed, only, of course, more advanced. Dartmouth is a "ship," as is Osborne, and the great Nelson Hall is officially and universally known as "The Quarterdeck." There are six terms of cadets at Dartmouth, and to each term is allotted two dormitories, between which is the "cabin" of the lieutenant in charge of the term. For each term there is a "gunroom" some

GERMAN BATTLESHIPS AND DESTROYERS

sixty by thirty feet, not including the spacious bay that extends for half the length of the room; and at one end of the corridor that runs the length of the great building is the chapel and at the other the spacious dining-hall and kitchen. In each term are a lieutenant in charge of the cadets and an engineer lieutenant in charge of the training in the workshops, while there is also a headmaster and a very large staff of assistant masters. The interest the boys take in their work is shown by the fact that not only on wet holidays, but at other times, the cadets will give up their spare time to work for themselves in the shops. For practical work at sea there is a modern sloop fitted with triple-expansion engines, as well as a modern destroyer of the sea-going class. In short, both at Osborne and Dartmouth the training given is about as perfect and complete as could be conceived. In the four years that the boy has had of shore training he has been superbly taught and thoroughly grounded in mathematics, mechanics, heat, electricity; in the science and practice of engineering; in French, English composition, and literature; in history, both general and naval; and geography, navigation, and the elements of seamanship, and in religious knowledge. Besides

French, German is also taken up by certain of the cadets.

At the expiration of the two years at Dartmouth the cadet passes to a cruiser, in which he cruises for six months with the particular service squadron, and the lad then passes to the fleet as a midshipman.

After three years' service the midshipman passes in seamanship (which includes also practical engineering), and, if successful, becomes an acting sub-lieutenant. As such he goes through an examination in navigation and general subjects, *i.e.*, languages, mathematics, etc., and eventually short courses in gunnery, torpedo, and pilotage. Those who pass this test specially well in the subjects they hope eventually to specialise in have a further course of six months at Greenwich, and go to sea on the completion of this course, whilst the sub-lieutenants who do not qualify for the longer course go immediately to sea. All sub-lieutenants, before being promoted lieutenant, must serve at least a year at sea, and obtain a certificate of competency for watch-keeping duty. Whilst at sea, both midshipmen and sub-lieutenants are employed for a portion of their time in engine-room duties. It is on reaching the rank of lieutenant that the officer first specialises;

and it may be taken that in the future practically some two-thirds of officers in this rank will specialise for one or other of the specialist branches, viz., engineering, gunnery, torpedo, navigation, and the marine or military branch. Officers qualifying for gunnery or torpedo go through a course at Whale Island for gunnery, or in the *Vernon* at Portsmouth for torpedo work, which lasts for one year, and a few specially selected ones a further course of one year. Lieutenants specialising as navigators undergo a six months' course in the navigation school at Portsmouth. Both gunnery and torpedo lieutenants revert to the general service on attaining the rank of commander, as also do a proportion of navigating lieutenants; but some navigating lieutenants continue to remain specialised whilst commander. All special branches, with the exception of certain engineer specialists, revert to general service on reaching the grade of captain. When the lieutenant specialises for engineering, the arrangement is different. Officers selected to qualify for engineering duties will go for a year to Keyham, and at the end of this course return to fleet duties as lieutenants (E). Although this lieutenant (E) is employed almost continuously on engineering duty, he will perform such deck and watch keeping

duties as will keep him as closely in touch with the executive side of his profession as his brethren who specialise as lieutenants (G, T, and N). The greater number of lieutenants (E) will revert to the general service list on promotion to commander, but a certain proportion will again specialise as commanders (E), just as do commanders (N). At the end of the year, at Keyham, from the lieutenants (E) certain specially selected officers will be chosen, and these will proceed with a more advanced course, lasting for two years. At the expiration of the course these officers will proceed to sea for a further period to obtain actual engine-room experience, and during their service will from time to time return to sea to keep in touch with the engine-room; but it is intended that they shall be more specially available for posts at the Admiralty and the dockyards, which require a high degree of scientific and professional knowledge. These officers will not, except under exceptional circumstances, revert to the general service list, but will become commanders (E), captains (E), and eventually attain to flag rank as specialists. They will not, therefore, be eligible for command of ships or fleets, but will ultimately fill the higher technical posts on shore, as, for instance, admiral superintendents of dockyards and other

THE ACTION OFF PORT ARTHUR BETWEEN THE JAPANESE AND RUSSIANS

August 10th, 1904

special billets on shore which require special engineering knowledge.

For lieutenants specialising for the marines branch the course will last for eighteen months, and is carried out at the head-quarters of one of the marines divisions. On its conclusion, lieutenants (M) proceed to sea. On attaining the rank of commander, something like two-thirds of the lieutenants (M) will revert to the general service list, but the remainder will continue to discharge the duties of marines in the higher ranks. These officers will forego the chance of commanding ships or fleets, but will find their promotion in the senior posts in the corps of Royal Marines. The very designations of "T," "G," "E," and "N" explain the nature of the work entrusted to these officers. With regard to marines, in addition to the ordinary work of the marine officer, as at present, the new lieutenants (M) will have the charge of all the musketry, field exercises, and battalion work of the ships—duties at present fulfilled by the gunnery lieutenant of the ship. The lieutenant (M) will, of course, have watch-keeping duties, and have the opportunity of maintaining his touch with the executive branch. There will also be a small number of officers who will qualify as lieutenants (I). These

officers will have charge of the instruction of midshipmen, and so supersede the naval instructor.

This, briefly, is the system under which the Navy of a year or two hence will be officered, and how those officers will be trained. The present engineer lieutenants and engineer commanders will, in all probability, be merged into the executive, as were the old navigation branch of masters and masters' mates, but will remain specialised for their particular branch.

The pay of officers of the Navy ranges from £91, 5s. per annum for a sub-lieutenant to £2190 for an admiral of the fleet. But this by no means represents the actual income that is earned, for in all ranks there are allowances. All specialised officers have special rates of pay, and there are also various other emoluments, such as command allowances, etc. The ordinary general service lieutenant draws pay ranging, according to seniority, from £182, 10s. to £292, but senior lieutenants in a ship also get a special allowance. The pay for commanders is £365, whilst for captains it ranges from £412, 10s. 6d. to £602, 5s. A captain also gets command allowances ranging from £219 to £328, 10s. The pay for the present engineering branch is very much on a par with that for the military branch.

FRENCH DESTROYERS

The pay branch is recruited from officers who enter after competitive examination as clerks, ranking with midshipmen, and who pass through the grades of assistant paymaster, paymaster, staff and fleet paymaster, to paymaster in chief.

Surgeons also enter by open competition, pass through the grades of staff-surgeon and fleet-surgeon to the rank of deputy inspector general and inspector general of hospitals and fleets.

Chaplains, a very large proportion of whom are also qualified as naval instructors, are appointed by the Admiralty. No one can be appointed who has not been ordained deacon and priest or who is over thirty-five years of age. Frequently at the expiration of their service in the Navy, chaplains are appointed to Greenwich Hospital livings, which are at the disposal of the Admiralty.

Officers and men when not at sea or in ships in nucleus commission or employed at one or other of the training establishments, are quartered in the naval barracks, of which there is one at each of the three great ports, Chatham, Portsmouth, and Devonport. The officer in charge of the barracks is a captain holding the rank of commodore; but, of course, the barracks, like every other establishment, is under the command of the admiral commander-

in-chief, who is the supreme authority at each port. All stoker and blue-jacket ratings, when not at sea, or in ships in nucleus commission, or undergoing training at Whale Island, etc., are berthed in the barracks until drafted to sea-going ships, but no marines are located in the barracks. This corps has its own barracks. The Marine Light Infantry has three divisions, viz., at Portsmouth, Chatham, and Devonport respectively, where officers and men remain until they are drafted for their tour of sea service. On entry, recruits for the Marine Light Infantry do not proceed to join a division, but undergo all their recruits' training at Walmer, where the depôt of this corps is established. Portsmouth is always the head-quarters of the Marine Artillery, their barracks being at Eastney. Here all officers and men of this branch of the great sea regiment are stationed when not attached to a ship, and all Marine Artillery recruits similarly go to Eastney.

As illustrating the size to which of late years the fleet has grown, it is interesting to note that since the close of the last century the *personnel* of the fleet has increased by some 20,000. At present the total number of officers and men in the sea service is 96,771, and includes 25 flag officers, 4430 commissioned officers, 812 subordinate officers, 1797

JAPANESE BATTLESHIP *ASAHI*

warrant officers, 87,007 petty officers and seamen, and 2700 boys. Employed in the coastguard are 103 commissioned officers, 247 chief officers, and 4019 petty officers and seamen, a total of 4369. The total of the Royal Marines is 19,983, made up of 467 commissioned officers, 44 warrant officers, 1415 staff officers and sergeants, 646 buglers and musicians, 17,062 rank and file, and 349 band boys. This gives a total for the whole fleet of 121,123, but this does not take into account cadets and pensioners serving in the fleet, boys in training, and employees of the various establishments ashore, which makes up a further total of 8777, thus bringing the grand total up to the large figure of 129,900. Want of space forbids a description of the reserves, the Admiralty, the dockyards, and other establishments connected with the Navy; but the writer hopes that in this and the preceding chapters he has succeeded in conveying to his readers some idea of the history and present organisation both of the *personnel* and material of that great Royal Navy on which it is "under the good providence of God that our wealth, prosperity, and peace depend."

THE SEAMAN'S DRESS

SOME NOTES ON THE COSTUME OF THE SAILORS OF THE PAST

By Commander CHARLES N. ROBINSON, R.N.
(Author of "The British Fleet," etc.)

"True Blue never stains: Hot Grog and More Pay for Sailors." This motto, displayed upon an old tavern sign, under which, no doubt, the seamen of the pigtail period and many of their successors were wont to assemble for jollification and carouse, expresses succinctly a time-honoured sentiment. The people of these favoured Isles warrantably associate True Blue, the stainless colour, with the gallant fellows, who, in the wooden bulwarks of the past, so staunchly upheld the honour of the flag, no less than with their descendants who, in steel-clad mastodons, or submarine mysteries—crammed with machinery and death-dealing engines—must be, unless the navigation of the air is mastered, their sole protectors from the violating heel of the invader. The well-known term "British Bluejacket" has, indeed, become a synonym for our brave seamen of the Royal Navy, just as that other phrase, "The Thin Red Line," recalls their noble brethren of the Land Service battling in defence of our hearths and homes

SEAMAN'S DRESS, EARLY BRITISH TO TUDOR TIMES

Circa A.D. 600 to 1600

From before the Conquest to the Armada

upon a foreign strand. But there is, too, in these oft-quoted words, a significant indication of that very reasonable desire which all must experience when reading of great deeds or bold exploits, to call up to the mind's eye the scene, and to picture for oneself the appearance of the actors. It is not sufficient for us merely to know what they did or why they did it; we must also be told what the heroes looked like, and in what manner of attire they played their several parts. It is my purpose, then, in these pages to attempt to gratify this natural desire, and to add to the preceding chapters,—wherein Mr H. L. Swinburne has so graphically described the fighting history of the Royal Navy, and Mr N. Wilkinson has deftly illustrated the "wooden walls" in which its successes have been achieved,—some brief notes concerning the attire of the men who served in the ships and fought the guns, to the building up and maintenance of this great Empire. This I could not have done with any satisfaction to myself were it not that I have had the able collaboration of Mr J. Jellicoe, who, from my collection of prints and pictures of the social side of sea life, has reproduced a series of sketches which should do much to bring home to the readers of this book the colour and cut of the costumes worn by the seamen of these islands from the dawn of sea power.

In the very early days of our history, and throughout the successive periods when Britons, Saxons, Danes, Anglo-Saxons, and Normans ruled in the land, the materials for our purpose are necessarily scanty. One point, however, comes out clearly from such records as exist, and this is that the dress of the seaman was the dress of the warrior almost always, if not

invariably, with some adaptation to the needs of sea life. We need not go back to the naked Briton in his coracle, though it is fairly certain that he only stripped, as the sailors did at Trafalgar, when he went into battle; but he was not, we may suppose, a deep-sea sailor, for at the time of the Roman invasion we read that the British seamen put afloat in speedy longboats, smeared with wax to lessen the friction of the waves, and that both the sails of the boats and the clothing of the crews were dyed a light blue colour to lessen the chance of their being seen, just as the war-ships of a later period for a similar reason have been painted grey. Thus early, and again under the Saxons, we get the connection of colour traditionally associated with our sailors; but with the coming of the Danes this was changed, for they wore black clothing, and their ships were painted black. Why this was so is not quite clear, but it is evident that the material for dyeing the clothing blue must have been more easily obtainable, since this colour again became usual with the common people before the Conquest.

The nucleus of the sea fighting organisation before the coming of William originated in the north, and was supplied by the Buscarles, a force of sea warriors regularly maintained to sail and fight the King's ships or busses. The dress of these men consisted of a tunic of coarse, rough woollen cloth, dyed blue, drawers, stockings or leg bandages and shoes. The tunic sometimes had short sleeves, and at others none at all, and a girdle was frequently worn round the waist for the support of weapons, while a purse or pocket hung from the shoulder. Spears and a shield were the arms of offence and defence, with, later on, a sword or axe. The officers, Rector,

SEAMAN'S DRESS,
THE COMMONWEALTH AND RESTORATION PERIODS
Circa A.D. 1649 to 1689
With Blake and Penn, Rupert and Sandwich

Batsuen, and Stirman were distinguished from the remainder of the crew mainly by the ornamentation of their clothing, or by the magnificence and variety of their weapons. Sometimes the tunic was covered with rings of leather or metal by way of armour, and a conical helmet was worn, with or without a hood. The leather armour, owing to its comparative lightness, appears to have been specially adapted for the seaman's use, the dyed leather being cut in shape like the scales of a fish, and stitched on in over-laying flaps, so that it easily accommodated itself to the movements of the body.

Throughout the Middle Ages, the days of feudalism, the seamen wore the ordinary clothing of the common people, but with the addition of a jack or jerkin, blazoned with the crest or cognisance of the King, or the feudal lord, or the arms of the port to which they owed allegiance. The shipmen or mariners, although necessarily fighting men, were no longer regularly in the King's service, but, like the ships, were drawn from the merchant navy in times of war, when their numbers were augmented by the men-at-arms and other soldiers. As, however, the ships closed for battle, and the fighting was of a hand-to-hand character, they were obliged to have some kind of defence, and the thickly quilted linen or canvas jack, with its distinguishing mark before and behind, served both for protection and a sign of nationality. The jacks of the sailors of the Cinque Ports who, in 1217, went out to meet and beat the fleet of the invader, were distinguished by "a red crosse and the armes of the Portis underneathe," a privilege reassigned to them by each successive king until the time of Henry VIII. When they were sailors of some other port, doubtless their jacks were dis-

tinguished by the arms of that port, or, as those of the soldiers were, by the red cross alone. The Articles of War, drawn up in the reign of Edward III., ordained that "every man, of what estate, condition or nation he be, so that he be of our party, shall wear a sign of the arms of St George, large, both before and behind; upon peril that if he be slain or wounded to death, he that hath done so to him shall not be put to death, for default of the cross that he lacketh. And no enemy, whether prisoner or not, shall wear the said sign of St George, upon pain of death." In jacks so distinguished did our sailors fight the famous battles of Sluys, and "L'Espagnols sur Mer," and probably many later actions, for the accounts of Henry V., Edward IV., and Henry VII. show that it was customary to supply livery to the seamen. In the last-named reign, one hundred "jackettes" at one shilling and fourpence apiece were bought for the same number of seamen, sent from Cornwall to Berwick to join the fleet acting in conjunction with Surrey's army against Scotland. When I visited Japan the feudal system was still in force, and I have myself seen the retainers of a Daimio, or feudal lord, wearing jacks similar to those of our seamen of the Middle Ages, with their lord's cognisance and crest exhibited before and behind precisely as it was ordered by Edward III. That the shipmen were not accustomed to wear this livery when engaged in their commercial avocations we know from Chaucer, who, in the fourteenth century, describes a sailor as garbed "in a gowne of falding to the knee." Falding was a kind of coarse cloth like frieze, and this garment was probably that which under the designation "sea-gown," a rough weather cloak girdled at the waist, continued in use until after Stuart times.

SEAMAN'S DRESS, UNDER ANNE AND THE EARLY GEORGES

Circa A.D. 1702 to 1750

With Herbert and Russell, Vernon and Mathews

It was probably worn for a similar reason to that assigned in the "Avowynge of King Arthur":

> "Gay gowns of green, to hold their armour clean,
> And keep it from the wet,"

just as later the seamen wore a petticoat of canvas or frieze to preserve their small clothes from being tarred or chafed against the yards when aloft, or from wet when they were away in the boats. In 1573, when we are told that this garment was discarded by all but the older men and sailors, it probably obtained the name of sea-gown. Richard Braithwaite, the author of *Drunken Barnaby's Journal*, speaks of a sailor in the reign of Charles I. as wearing "a sea frocke which seems to have shrunke from him and growne too short," and the expression frequently recurs in the works of the Restoration dramatists and poets.

In Tudor times the livery of the royal seamen was changed to green and white, and the accounts of Henry VIII. show that the masters and pilots had sometimes coats of damask, mariners, gunners, and servitors coats of white and green cloth, and the officers coats of white and green camlet or satin. There does not appear to have been any reason to suppose that these coats of livery were worn except upon high days and holidays.[1] The nobles also wore, and dressed their men, in their own colours, and in the expedition of Willoughby and Chancellor in 1553 the instructions specifically direct that the "liveries in apparel," which were of

[1] There is evidence, however, that an engagement was accounted a holiday in this sense, and that they put on their smartest attire to fight in.

Watchet or sky-blue cloth, were only to be worn by the sailors on state occasions; moreover, ordinary clothes were stocked on board the ships and sold to the crews at cost price. As to what these articles included, we learn from an indent that there were canvas breeches and doublets lined with cotton, petticoats, stockings, caps, shoes, and shirts, worsted hose, and "rugge" for sea-gowns. Although in the time of Queen Elizabeth the custom of the Crown providing the crews with their jackets had ceased, the superior officers certainly on some occasions supplied the deficiency.[1] For armour, morions and dyed leather jerkins, quilted, were supplied to the seamen, while breast-plates are also mentioned. The costume, therefore, shown by Mr Jellicoe, in the centre sketch facing p. 338, may well be that worn by some of the officers and men who assisted at the defeat of the Spanish Armada. By the way, the petticoat mentioned above was, as the name denotes, a little coat, and not anything resembling the petticoat of female wear. A change in the method of wearing the hair should also be mentioned, the peaked beard and twisted moustachios having come in, apparently with other fashions due to the marriage of Philip of Spain with Mary. About this time, too, we hear of the jumper, which after many years became an ordinary article of seamen's attire, the term then describing a loose, comfortable jerkin which could be slipped on over the more tightly fitting garments.

The second plate of costume in this volume shows us the contrast between the more sober, sombre-clad people of the Commonwealth period, and the bright colours and fly-away

[1] Essex in 1597 referred to men pressed "in mariners' clothes" who did not know one rope from another.

SEAMAN'S DRESS, THE NAVAL OFFICER'S FIRST UNIFORM

Circa A.D. 1748 to 1778

With Boscawen and Hawke

garments characteristic of the Restoration and the later Stuarts. The Royal colour was now red, and when James I. renewed Elizabeth's grant of "livery suits" to the six principal masters of his ships, "fyne red cloth and velvet for garding," the coats were supplied by the Keeper of the King's wardrobe. These coats were liberally embroidered with ships, roses, crowns, etc., details of which are to be found in the warrant referring to the matter, and the grant was to be renewed annually at Easter to each of the officers specified, during his lifetime. Apparently it seems to have ceased for ever about the time of the Commonwealth. These officers, however, were those attached to the Court, and the commanders of ships wore then and for some time afterwards a similar costume to that of civilians of their own rank and station in life, the distinguishing marks of the party they served being shown by the colours of their sashes, the favours in their hats, the badges on their arms, and so on.

In 1623, in order "to avoyde nastie beastlyness by diseases and unwholesome ill smells in every ship," the issue of slop clothing by the Crown was ordered, and has continued with more or less regularity ever since. From this time onwards, thereby, a very large degree of uniformity was brought about in the costume of the seamen. Although at times they might have an opportunity of purchasing clothes on shore, and when they did so, and so long as they were decently attired, some licence was permitted in the matter; as a rule, the slops from the ships' stores formed the only source of supply, and so all were dressed pretty much alike. The reason assigned for providing the ships with slop clothing is significant, but until the Navy Commissioners under the Commonwealth took

the matter in hand the seamen were not much better off. The slop clothing was to be sold them at cost price, but as a matter of fact so many extra and illegal commissions were added that in the result it is said "the men had rather starve than buy them." The slop list included, in 1655, canvas jackets, canvas drawers, cotton drawers, cotton waistcoats, shirts, cotton stockings, and shoes. Thrum or thrummed caps were also in use, and had been for some time before, since Durfey says: "The sailors with their thrums doe stand on higher place than all the land." A cap of cloth seems to have been thrummed by passing short pieces of worsted through it until it had a hairy or furry appearance, and was doubtless thus made warmer and also of better protection to the head from a blow. The only colours mentioned in connection with the seaman's dress of this time are buff and blue, and therefore we may conclude that the victories of Blake were won by sailors dressed in these colours and in the garments just enumerated.

Red was introduced again after the Restoration; and when instructions on the subject were issued by the Duke of York in 1663, it was laid down that the only slops permitted to be sold on board his Majesty's ships would be "red caps, Monmouth caps, yarn stockings, Irish stockings, blue shirts, white shirts, cotton waistcoats, cotton drawers, neat's-leather shoes, blue neck-cloths, canvas suits, and rugs." Neither jackets nor breeches are mentioned, and it has been assumed that these articles were supplied by Government. Such a proceeding would be entirely contrary to the custom which had prevailed for nearly a century, and it is more likely that jackets and breeches were covered by the phrase "canvas

SEAMAN'S DRESS, THE ERA OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Circa A.D. 1787 to 1812

With Howe and Jervis, Duncan and Nelson

suits," particularly as the sailors are described as wearing "pitche cloathe," or a "pitch't jacket." In any case, it is clear from references made to the matter by writers of the period that the prevailing colour in the dress of the seaman was red, and Wycherley, in particular, in *The Plain Dealer*, in 1677, refers to the red breeches which were part of a sailor's wardrobe.

The third figure in the right-hand group facing p. 340 is that of an officer in the Duke of York and Albany's maritime regiment of foot (the Lord High Admiral's regiment), raised in 1664, the first regiment of marines, a force which from that time onwards was destined to take an active share in the fortunes of the Navy. For uniform this regiment had yellow coats lined with red, red breeches, and red stockings; but about twenty years later this was changed to red coats lined with yellow, dark grey breeches, white stockings; and hats laced with broad gold-coloured lace. It is worth noting that the marines were not put to the cost of providing their own clothes, whereas the sailors then and ever since have had to buy their clothing, whether it was a prescribed uniform or not, out of their pay.

Throughout the reigns of William III., Anne, and George I., the costume of the officers of the Navy conformed to the dress of the period, and was affected by precisely the same influences. Indeed, it may be said that from now onwards, even when there was a prescribed uniformity in colour and in marks of distinction and rank, the clothes, in cut, shape, and other respects, were similar to those fashionable among well-to-do civilians on shore. Up to the middle of the eighteenth century, however, every officer dressed as he liked,

or as his means afforded. Herbert of Torrington, Cloudesley Shovell, Rooke, and Russell were clothed in crimson, Lincoln green, or London blue, and wore the flowing wig "which then distinguished alike the men of the robe and the sword." Commodore Brown, who with Vernon took Portobello in 1739, wore a full suit of russet brown, and Mr Locker wrote to the Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries: "My late gallant father, who went to sea in 1745, used to tell us that Captain Wyndham and all the officers of the *Kent*, of 70 guns, in which he embarked, wore grey-and-silver faced with scarlet. Such foppery, however, at that period, was not infrequently combined with checked shirts and petticoat trousers." There seems, however, to have been a preference shown for scarlet faced with blue, or blue faced with scarlet, both from the portraits of the commanders and the prints of the time. Smollett makes Commodore Hawser Trunnion express a wish to be buried in "the red jacket which I wore when I boarded the *Renummy*." The *Renommez* was captured on 13th September 1747, by the *Dover*, Captain W. Shirley, who afterwards became Earl Ferrars, and it is possible that Fitzroy Lee, who is supposed to have been the prototype of Trunnion, may have been on board her. Smollett may also be consulted for the costume of Captain Whipple, a naval dandy in a pink silk coat, and Lieutenant Bowling, in a striped flannel jacket and red breeches, as examples of varieties of naval officers' dress during the period in which he wrote.

From about 1719 to 1750 the seamen are invariably depicted in the grey jackets, striped waistcoats, and red "wide-kneed trousers" supplied by the slop-sellers. Kerchiefs of

SEAMAN'S DRESS, THE TARS OF TRAFALGAR

Circa A.D. 1805


TOM BOWLING

various colours were worn round the neck, flat-topped, three-cornered hats, or leather caps faced with red, and not infrequently a petticoat of canvas or baize. A full description of this clothing is given in *The British Fleet*, taken from an order issued on 24th August 1706 by Prince George of Denmark, then the Lord High Admiral. It is worth noting, also, that in Betagh's voyage to the Pacific in 1719, the writer mentions how, meeting another vessel, "we knew her to be English because the seamen wore trousers." The changes in the uniform of the marines are also shown facing p. 342. Here, then, we have the dress of the men who fought in the battles of Bantry Bay, Beachy Head, La Hogue, Vigo, Malaga, Cape Passaro, the taking of Portobello, and Mathews' action off Toulon, while it was also that of the crew of the *Centurion* in Anson's famous voyage round the world.

In 1748, a uniform was first established for all naval officers of executive rank, with a distinctive colour, buttons, and marks of grade. At that time our naval officers were alone among those of the European Powers without a uniform, and the proposition for a distinctive dress originated with the sea officers themselves; for at a meeting of one of their clubs in 1745, a resolution was passed to the effect that such a dress "is useful and necessary for the commissioned officers as well as agreeable to the practice of other nations," and a committee was appointed to memorialise the Admiralty on the subject. The suggestion appears to have been favourably received, and the selection of the colours was made by George II. himself, as appears by a statement received by Mr Locker from the lips of Admiral-of-the-Fleet the Hon. John Forbes: "Adverting to the establishment of the naval uni-

form, the Admiral said he was summoned on that occasion to attend the Duke of Bedford (then First Lord of the Admiralty), and being introduced into an apartment surrounded with various dresses, his opinion was asked as to the most appropriate; the Admiral said red and blue, or blue and red, as these were our national colours. 'No,' replied his Grace, 'the King has determined otherwise, for, having seen my Duchess riding in the park a few days ago, in a habit of blue faced with white, the dress took the fancy of his Majesty, who has appointed it for the uniform of the Royal Navy!'" The adoption of this uniform was notified to the Navy by an order dated 13th April 1748, in which it was stated that the better to distinguish the rank of sea officers it had been decided to establish a military clothing for admirals, captains, commanders, and lieutenants; "and judging it also necessary that persons acting as midshipmen should likewise have a uniform clothing, in order to their carrying the appearance which is necessary to distinguish their class, to be in the rank of gentlemen, and give them better credit and figure in executing the commands of their superior officers," it was ordered that no commissioned officer or midshipman was from that time to presume to wear any other uniform than that which properly belonged to his rank.

Patterns of the garments thus prescribed were lodged at the Navy Office and at the several dockyards for inspection,[1] but no regulations were issued describing the exact form of the dress, and no patterns were sent abroad. It was some little time, therefore, before uniformity became general. The uniform,

[1] Some are still to be seen at the Royal United Service Institution.

SEAMAN'S DRESS, A PERIOD OF PEACE

Circa A.D. 1828 to 1833

Some of Marryat's characters

also, was restricted to commissioned officers and midshipmen, and it was not for nearly forty years that the warrant officers, which rank included masters, surgeons, pursers, gunners, boatswains, and carpenters, received a uniform dress. Nor was any uniform prescribed for the seamen, but from this time onwards blue and white were the colours more frequently affected by everybody in the sea service.

In the portraits of the officers of the middle of the eighteenth century the very gorgeous and elaborate full-dress uniform of 1748 is shown, and it seems likely that the officers grumbled at the additional expense, for in less than twenty years this full dress was ordered to be discontinued, and what was known as the "frock uniform clothing" became the customary dress. A little later this was made full dress, an "undress" uniform being at the same time ordered. Facing p. 344 the undress which became full dress is shown in the centre sketch for a rear-admiral, and in the upper right-hand vignette that for a captain. Boscawen and Hawke doubtless wore this dress, the sketch being actually taken from a portrait of Captain Suckling. The alteration made, in 1774, in the captain's dress is shown in the little sketch at the bottom of the same plate, the portrait here used being that of Captain Cook, the great navigator and discoverer. The dress of the bluejacket and the uniform of the marine at about this period are shown in the same plate, all these sketches being taken from contemporary pictures; the bluejacket, as we may now call him, accoutred for landing, with his blanket slung round his shoulders, cutlass, pistol, and the burning match in his hat, being particularly interesting.

The several changes in uniform which now took place with

great frequency could not be fully described in the space at my disposal. The orders and regulations are most of them in existence to-day, and in all cases very close study is required to mark the little differences sometimes made. The buttons, for example, were originally of what is known as rose pattern; for these, flat buttons with an anchor and cable engraved on them were substituted. Then, in 1787, the anchor was surrounded by a laurel wreath, and two years later it was changed again, while it was not until 1812 that a crown was placed over the anchor. In 1825 the officers of the navigating (masters) department wore the seal of the Navy Office on their buttons, and the same device on their collars. Physicians and surgeons had an anchor with a snake twisted round the shank and stock—the seal of the Sick and Hurt Office—on their buttons and collars. Similarly, the paymaster branch wore the seal of the Victualling Office. And when engineers were introduced, their button was distinguished by a copy of the old beam engine surmounted by a crown. Distinctions in rank, first marked by the amount of embroidery, were shown after 1774 by the arrangement of the buttons: captains over a certain standing wearing them by threes, captains of less seniority by twos, while the masters and commanders, a rank then corresponding to the commanders of a later date, wore their buttons regularly. In 1783 marks of distinction on the white cuffs were introduced, admirals having three rows of embroidery, vice-admirals two, and rear-admirals one; but the grade was also shown in the undress by the arrangement of the buttons and buttonholes. When the warrant officers were given a uniform, the coat was entirely of blue, with blue lapells and blue cuffs, and a fall-

SEAMAN'S DRESS, IN THE REIGN OF THE SAILOR KING

Circa A.D. 1833 to 1843

down collar, the coats to be lined, but not edged, with white. The midshipman's coat was always marked by a white turn-back to the stand-up collar, precisely what has been known as the midshipman's patch ever since. White cloth waist-coats and breeches were prescribed with all these dresses, but they were more commonly made of kerseymere or nankin, and were buff rather than white.[1] All officers wore three-cornered cocked hats, but in 1799 a distinction was made between flag officers and others in the method of wearing the hat, the former wearing it athwartships, while the latter wore it fore and aft. The difficulty of wearing a three-cornered hat fore and aft quickly brought about an alteration in its shape, and by 1805 the hats worn were almost exactly the same as those which may be seen on the Lord Mayor's coachman and foot-men. Generally, the changes brought about by the orders of 1787 and 1805 are shown facing p. 346, the group on the left being the earlier uniform, and that on the right the undress at the time of the battle of Trafalgar. These sketches are all copied from contemporary dated prints. When epaulettes were introduced in 1795, they were used to denote rank, the admirals wearing two, one on each shoulder, with one, two, or three stars to denote rear, vice, or full admiral respectively. Captains of over three years' standing wore two plain gold epaulettes, but if under that seniority one on the right shoulder, while the masters and commanders wore one on the left shoulder. These epaulettes were not stiffened so much as those worn later, but hung down more like tassels. The Trafalgar uniform remained in force till 1812.

From about the middle of the eighteenth century, and

[1] See Captain's Orders, *Pub. N.R.S.*, vol. xxiv., App. I.

well into the nineteenth, the dress of the seaman underwent a gradual change in shape, but it comprised in the main a blue jacket, waistcoat, a check shirt, a neckerchief, blue or white trousers, grey stockings, buckled shoes, and a tarpaulin or straw hat. Most of these garments were ornamented to the taste of the wearer, and many of them varied in colour. The hat, from being three-cornered, became round. It was made of leather, or tarred canvas (japanned) or straw, and turned up at the sides, with a coloured lining; dark blue or light blue ribbons, with the name of the ship painted thereon, were common. The jacket was slashed at the cuff, often lined with white, ornamented with many buttons, and sometimes had narrow white strips or piping sewn on the seams. The waistcoat was generally scarlet or buff; red-and-yellow or bandana kerchiefs were frequent, but black predominated, the fable that black was introduced in memory of Nelson's death being of quite modern origin and without foundation. The check shirts were of red-and-blue, and were sometimes striped like the children's "galatea" suits; trousers of the same material were worn in the summer time in place of white. In 1756, and for some little time after that, seamen wore their hair long and thick, but not queued. About 1779 they appear like wigs, tied in a queue behind. Then gradually the pigtail, made of their own hair, and stiffened out with oakum and grease, got longer and thicker, until it is shown down to their waists; but I think this must have been exceptional. A smart sailor of the *Royal Sovereign* in 1805 is described as being dressed in "white ducks, long in the legs and taut in the hips, check shirt, a round blue jacket with bright buttons, black tie, white stockings, long

SEAMAN'S DRESS,
EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF THE VICTORIAN ERA

Circa A.D. 1837 to 1897

quartered shoes, a regular neat-cut, low-crowned tarpaulin hat, with the name of his ship painted on the ribbon, and with a pigtail down to his sternpost." The late Admiral-of-the-Fleet Sir Alexander Milne told me that the last sailor with a pigtail he saw was sitting on the coaming of the main hatch in the *Ganges* in 1823, having his queue combed and cleaned; and Captain Glascock, in *The Naval Sketch Book*, says that "when ties were a British boast" they were worn on week-days "doubled up in a bight," but on Sundays at their full length. Kerchiefs were worn outside the jacket, and with one corner hanging down behind to protect it from the hair; and they do not appear, as a rule, to have been put under the collar of the shirt until the pigtail had gone. The frock collar was not worn outside the jacket, nor was it square in shape, until well into the nineteenth century. It is said to have been copied from the uniform of some American sailors, the extra covering it provided to the lungs of the men at the back when their jackets were off protecting them against pulmonary diseases. The three rows of white tape round the collar were not introduced till 1857, and have no connection whatever with Nelson's victories. Rows of tape on the collar of varying breadth and number originated in the men's love of ornament. The trousers, which towards the end of the eighteenth century were very tight at the ankle, were made looser gradually, but the large bell-mouthed, flowing shape did not appear until after 1812, and is said to have originated in the desire of the men to utilise the full breadth of the material for trousers which they bought as slops from the ship's stores.

Up to the time of the conclusion of the war with Russia,

although there was no uniform for the men, and regulations on the subject were not issued until 1857, the dress had gradually become very similar to that which was made uniform by the instructions of that date. The regularity had been brought about by the issue of ready-made clothing, and by an order which forbade the wearing of the civilian clothes, in which the men often joined before the days of the continuous service system, until after dark. The difference in the slop clothing, as issued at various periods from 1812 onwards, may be seen in the sets of prints showing the uniform of the officers, and issued on authority; nearly all these sets contain pictures of the sailors also. During the same period, however, the captains of many ships dressed their boat's crews, and sometimes their whole ship's company, in whatever fashion seemed to them best, and the vagaries of some of the commanders were very strange, leading at times to odd difficulties. The captain of the *Vernon*, in 1840, ordered his men on fitting out to wear red serge frocks; but when the ship had been in commission a short time it was found difficult to replace the worn articles, and presently all the remaining red frocks were appropriated to one watch, while the others wore blue, which were obtainable on board. As it was the custom to station the men on the yards alternately by their watches, their chequered appearance when furling sails can be imagined. In the *Blazer*, in 1845, the ship's company wore blue-and-white striped guernseys, the origin, it has been assumed, of the term "blazers." Similarly, the commander of the *Harlequin*, in 1853, dressed his gig's crew as harlequins, and it was in ridicule of this fashion that M. H. Barker, the novelist, made the commander of the

SEAMAN'S DRESS, THE ERA OF STEAM AND STEEL

Circa A.D. 1850 to 1900

Tulip dress his ship's company in green with an imitation of the flower reversed for their caps. Probably "The Old Sailor" did not know that in selecting green he was repeating history, for in 1740 a contract was made for supplying the seamen with green baize frocks and trousers. Moreover, the practice of the ship's company or the boat's crews wearing the colours or badges of their captains was nearly as old as the Navy itself, and Anson dressed the men of his own barge in a costume resembling that of the Thames watermen—scarlet jackets, blue silk vests, and silver badges on their arms.

Mention has been made of the sets of sketches of uniform issued at various times during the nineteenth century. These, though not infrequently met with in the printsellers' shops, are scarce, especially in a complete state, but they have been used by Mr Jellicoe for Plates facing pp. 350, 352. The first of these shows the costume worn by the characters in Captain Marryat's novels, and here may be seen Mr Midshipman Easy and Peter Simple, Captain Tartar and Captain Kearney, with Mr Chucks the boatswain, and other well-known personages as they appeared in the life. The other plate shows the change brought about for ten years by William IV., in 1833, when he made the facings red instead of white, the midshipman's patch alone excepted. All these changes, and others made in 1843, 1846, 1853, 1856, 1864, 1875, 1877, 1879, 1885, 1886, 1889, 1891, and 1892 onwards, are published in regulations in the Navy Lists of those dates. Moreover, an illustrated manual has been for some years issued by the Admiralty, which can be purchased by the public like other official documents that are not confidential. In these various instructions it may be seen how

the method of marking the grades of officers gradually developed, and the executive curl came into existence; how the tall hat with its "lightning conductor," was displaced by one shorter in the crown, and that by a "sou'-wester"; how a cap with a gold band and crown gave way to a cap with a mohair band and badge, the peak of which varied considerably, and its shape also. How, too, knee-breeches disappeared, and pantaloons took their place, to be followed by trousers; how gold lace succeeded gold braid; epaulettes and aiguillettes were adopted; and coloured velvet stripes were introduced to denote the officers of various departments. The dates of the various regulations given above should afford some indication of the manner in which the uniform of the officers has been altered, mainly, it must be said, in matters of detail, and tending generally, though not always, towards the simplification of the wardrobe.

If this has been so in the case of the officers, much more so has it been the case with the dress of the men. The tarpaulin hat and the blue jacket—each in turn the origin of a pet name for the sailor—have disappeared with hemp and canvas. Once more the seaman has the advantage of buying ready-made clothing, thus reverting to the practice of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The petty officers' badges of rank have altered but little, but characteristic distinguishing marks, like the flag, the gun, the torpedo, the screw-propeller, the Indian club, and the axe and the maul, indicative of special qualifications or duties, have been evolved for the scientific branches as the march of progress made them necessary.

Although not primarily intended for the purpose, it may

be that Mr Jellicoe's sketches and these notes will prove of some use to the artist and the actor, for unquestionably there has often been great laxity displayed in the presentation of our seamen on canvas and behind the footlights. I refer, of course, to the dress of past times, wherein too frequently the greatest blunders occur. It is possible that one reason for these mistakes is to be found in the custom of the costumiers to speak of the dresses worn at particular times as being of "the Nelson period," and so on. As Nelson must have worn the uniform of at least six different periods, it is manifest that to connect any one of them directly with his name is only too likely to lead to error. Similarly, the artist may plead, as an excuse for inaccuracy, that complete and trustworthy coloured illustrations of naval costume by contemporary hands are not to be found in our museums. Nor have the writers on dress devoted much attention to this branch of their subject. It is true, of course, that many other people are equally ignorant, but the public taste for a correct conception of the appearance of the tars who made the Empire has considerably improved in recent times, and if we have here assisted, ever so little, towards satisfying this aspiration we shall have accomplished our object.

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