

be no difficulty in obtaining volunteers for the purpose in the harbors of the colony. The higher the speed of the boats and the larger the number employed, the greater the certainty of a successful attack, which as a rule should be conducted at night or at early dawn.

The number I propose should be supplied for each of the principal harbors is not less than three.

It is possible that there are already steam launches at the ports to be defended which could be made available in time of war, provided an agreement were entered into with their owners and the necessary fittings procured; but it is to be understood that three new boats for each harbor are absolutely necessary. They should be procured from England or built in the colony—in the latter case a pattern vessel should be obtained.

The advantages to be gained from the employment of torpedo boats are many. They are admitted to be most formidable weapons against ships in the hands of daring and determined men. They could be procured almost at once, and are not very costly either to purchase or to maintain. They do not require specially trained men for working them, beyond the seamen and engineers who are to be found in every port. Lastly they can be utilized in time of peace for the Government service.

Advantages to be gained from employment of torpedo boats.

After an inspection of the several harbors of the colony, I find that the conditions, under which the question has to be considered in each case, are very nearly similar, and that there are four modes of attack open to the enemy:—

Modes of attack upon the harbors of colony open to an enemy.

1. He may endeavor to force the entrance in order to take up a position inside a harbor, from which he will command the town and shipping.
2. He may attempt to land a body of men with the object of overcoming the resistance of the local troops assembled to resist his advance; and, if successful, he might either levy a contribution and retire, or attempt to capture the batteries with a view to the permanent occupation of the harbor.
3. He may bombard the town and shipping from positions at sea, conveniently situated for the purpose.
4. He may blockade the entrance to the port.

Although the first and second modes of attack can be easily met by the proposed system of defence—batteries, torpedoes, and land forces; the third and fourth operations would be best dealt with by naval means.

It may be observed, however, that the possession of the torpedo boats, which I have recommended, would probably afford a simple way of counteracting the bombardment from the open sea—and even the blockade of the port—if the boats were made of such a size as to admit of their being conveyed, on board of a powerful steamer, to a convenient point, from which to launch them against the enemy's vessels.