

The fall of Quebec and the conquest of French Canada was mainly due to the fact that our superior sea power closed the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the French and opened it to us. In any similar struggle in the future this route will be as vital as in the past.

The expedition to Egypt under Abercromby in 1801, the Peninsular War, the expedition to the Crimea, the South African War just concluded, are all instances of great military enterprises which could only have been carried out by a nation holding the command of the sea.

The command of the sea is determined by the result of great battles at sea, such as Salamis, Actium, Lepanto, those which led up to the defeat of the Armada, and those between the Dutch and English in the seventeenth century, in which each side concentrated his whole available force for the decisive struggle.

To any naval Power the destruction of the fleet of the enemy must always be the great object aimed at. It is immaterial where the great battle is fought, but wherever it may take place the result will be felt throughout the world, because the victor will afterwards be in a position to spread his force with a view to capturing or destroying any detached forces of the enemy, and generally to gather the fruits of victory in the shape of such outlying positions as the New Hebrides, Fijis, Singapore, Samoa, Cuba, Jamaica, Martinique, the Philippines, Malta, or Aden, which may be in possession of the enemy, his shipping and commerce, or even to prosecute such oversea campaigns as those in the Peninsula and South Africa.

Stress is laid on the importance of the great battle for supremacy, because the great development of the navies of France, Germany, the United States, and Russia indicate the possibility that such battles may have to be fought in the future. It is the battleships chiefly which will have to be concentrated for the decisive battle, and arrangements with this object must be made during peace.

The geographical conditions and the varied interests of the maritime Powers prevent such complete concentration in modern times as was practicable in the past. Thus Russia divides her battleships between the Baltic and the Pacific; the United States between the Atlantic and Pacific; both Germany and France have concentrated in European waters, where also the greater part of the British battleships are massed.

Our possible enemies are fully aware of the necessity of concentrating on the decisive points. They will endeavour to prevent this by threatening our detached squadrons and trade in different quarters, and thus obliging us to make further detachments from the main fleets. All these operations will be of secondary importance, but it will be necessary that we should have sufficient power available to carry on a vigorous offensive against the hostile outlying squadrons without unduly weakening the force concentrated for the decisive battle, whether in Europe or elsewhere.

The immense importance of the principle of concentration and the facility with which ships and squadrons can be moved from one part of the world to another—it is more easy to move a fleet from Spithead to the Cape or Halifax than it is to move a large army, with its equipment, from Cape Town to Pretoria—points to the necessity of a single navy, under one control, by which alone concerted action between the several parts can be assured.

In the foregoing remarks the word "defence" does not appear. It is omitted advisedly, because the primary object of the British navy is not to defend anything, but to attack the fleets of the enemy, and, by defeating them, to afford protection to British dominions, shipping, and commerce. This is the ultimate aim.

To use the word "defence" would be misleading, because the word carries with it the idea of a thing to be defended, which would divert attention to local defence instead of fixing it on the force from which attack is to be expected.

The traditional *role* of the British navy is not to act on the defensive, but to prepare to attack the force which threatens—in other words, to assume the offensive. On one occasion England departed from her traditional policy, and, acting on the defensive, kept her ships in harbour unrigged and unmanned, with the result that the Dutch fleet sailed up the Medway and burnt the ships of war at their moorings.

The strength and composition of the British navy, or of any British squadron, depends, therefore, upon the strength and composition of the hostile forces which it is liable to meet.

The total estimated national expenditure for 1902–3, exclusive of war charges, amounts to £129,159,000, of which the navy estimates account for £31,255,500, or about one-fourth, which is equal to a contribution of 15s. 1d. per head of the population of the United Kingdom. If this were divided equally per head among the white population of the Empire, the charge per head would amount to 12s. 0¼d. For the actual naval expenditure per head in the several parts of the Empire, see Appendix A.

The annual value of British trade, which it is the ultimate object of the navy to protect, amounted in 1900 to—

Trade of United Kingdom with foreign countries	£ 665,895,000
"	"	British dominions beyond the seas	211,555,000
Total trade of United Kingdom			877,450,000
Total trade of British dominions beyond the seas with foreign countries and among themselves			327,500,000

Of this last about one-third is estimated to be intercolonial.

It will be seen that about one-fourth of the total trade of the Empire is not directly connected with the United Kingdom.

The question may with advantage be further considered with reference to—(1) Atlantic Ocean. (2) Eastern Seas and Pacific Ocean.

The trade which passes the west coast of Africa cannot be placed at a less value than £140,000,000 per annum, of which about one-fourth is with South African ports, one-third with