

PREFACE

UNDER the general and very comprehensive head of Ocean Trade and Shipping come a whole host of separate industries and undertakings. Many of these, and of the rights and liabilities connected with them, have long been the subject of important treatises. To others of them, special reference may be found scattered in business publications here and there. In the case of many, however, it would be difficult to find treatment of them anywhere. The whole, collectively, have apparently never been dealt with at all. And indeed to supply, in a single small volume, a summary of enterprises so many and so various must needs be a somewhat courageous undertaking. Still, by a process of selection, elimination and condensation, and with the kind and valuable aid of many expert business friends, I have done my best. It is of course an explanatory work, proceeding on broad lines, rather than a technical treatise. It does, however, as I hope, deal with many if not most of the subjects on which information will be useful or at any rate instructive to the naval and military officers for whom it is primarily intended. If this should prove so, I shall be content.

To army officers, a knowledge of the machinery of shipping and its working must at the least be interesting, seeing that the transfer and maintenance of oversea forces involve its constant use, while in the event of war sea transport becomes for an imperial Power a military factor of the first importance.

Naval officers, on their part, are brought, in the exercise of their profession, into frequent contact with oversea trade. Not only does this occur in making arrangements for the supply of fleets and naval bases, but what is a more vital consideration, naval warfare has long been closely identified with the attack on and defence of commerce. Much has been written and is constantly being written on this aspect of the subject ; but while such writings