

freedom of the canal from taking any measures necessary to that end, even if they are not in accordance with the provisions. At the time of the Arabi revolt, England found it necessary to land troops at Ismailia to check any attempt at wrecking, and she may now have to keep her warships in the waterway and its ports and to fortify the banks. We have not protested against the American claim to fortify the entrances to the Panama Canal, because in the present weakness of treaty sanctions we recognize the need for some effective guardianship of neutralized waterways, as well as of neutralized countries. In taking whatever steps are necessary in the Suez Canal, England will be upholding public law as fully as when she went to the help of Belgium.—*Central Law Journal*.

THE ARMING OF MERCHANTMEN.

The right of a merchant ship to defend itself against capture by the enemy in time of war, and to arm itself for that purpose, has never until quite recently been doubted.

The carrying of guns for defensive purposes was a common practice in the British merchant service during the Napoleonic wars. A reminder of those days may still here and there be found in the bulwarks of sailing vessels painted white and black to represent dummy gun ports.

The vessels of the East India Company and the Hudson Bay Company were at one time specially exempted from the duty of sailing under convoy, in consideration of the sufficiency of their armament. In *James' Naval History*, some particulars may be found of the armament of three East Indiamen convoyed from the Hooghly in 1809. The "*Stratham*" and the "*Europa*," each of 800 tons register, were armed with 20 medium guns and 10 carronades. The "*Lord Keith*," of 600 tons, carried 10 or 12 guns. As late as 1855, the ships engaged in the opium trade were armed for the protection of their valuable cargo against pirates and others. Unquestioned as the right of defence for