Let such teach others who themselves excel,
And censure freely who have written well.

Now Lieutenant Bellairs is what is called a torpedo-lieutenant, that is, he has passed through the special course laid down to qualify a lieutenant to be an expert in submarine mining and the management of the torpedo, which course it is his aim to depreciate, and to abolish as unnecessary. So far, then, he should be a competent critic, but his experience of the service is small, and for this all his literary ability and historical references cannot compensate. I cannot therefore bow to his authority, and while I consider his proposal practically to abolish the present gunnery and torpedo schools to be dangerously reactionary, I have no hesitation as to the impracticable and unpractical nature of the substitutes which he suggests. That we may agree with many of his premises goes without saying, and I give him full credit for having hit certain blots and deficiencies, but it is easy to destroy and far less easy to rebuild as many a reformer has found before him.

So far as I can see Mr. Bellairs has given no proof whatever of the deterioration of the practical naval officer, due, according to him, to academic training, and divorce from life at sea.

As I have had somewhat longer experience than Mr. Bellairs I can only place my opinion against his, and I can confidently say that I have not observed this tendency, as, except in rare instances, the naval officer, like the "handy man," is ready and practical, and I fail to recognise the picture drawn by Mr. Bellairs of the naval officer who has ruined his sight, and lost his naval character by "poring over miserable books."

It is with no wish to be personal or paradoxical that I make use of the following argument, but I must honestly confess that Mr. Bellairs has in his own person done his best to prove his case, as I cannot conceive how any practical officer who knows what ship-life is, can suppose that the lectures on which he mainly depends as substitutes for the gunnery and torpedo courses on board the *Excellent* and *Vernon* can be