

more rigidly than they have hitherto been accustomed to do ; to call for more detailed accounts, and to ascertain satisfactorily in what manner the sums voted have been actually expended ; whether in the repair or construction of those classes of ships which I have recommended, or in improvident and injudicious expenses on those of inferior and objectionable descriptions. Above all, let me advise them not to be silenced or mystified by any official replies which they do not perfectly understand, and to be assured that there is nothing mysterious or unintelligible in naval affairs, where a disposition exists to explain them openly and candidly.

The French minister of marine gives in a full return of the whole navy, specifying the state and condition of each ship, and the measures proposed to be taken with those requiring repair.

If a similar plan had been adopted here in 1815, and some little pains taken by independent members of the House of Commons to acquire correct information, I am sure many hundred thousand pounds might have been saved during the last fifteen years. It has often vexed me to see such warm and eager debates on the most insignificant items of the estimates, when I well knew that every ten-gun brig voted was ten thousand pounds thrown away, and so on in proportion with respect to the twenty-eights, &c. ; but "the whale went after the tub," and these, which were the really injudicious expenses, passed without comment or observation.