

relative matter, and it will be a long time before Canada can afford to maintain a force strong enough to make the impunity absolute.

Secondly, having decided upon our general aim, we must decide how to attain it. All our preparations must be based on the human factor. Men are and always will be more important than machinery. Inventions may succeed each other, the best ships of to-day may be useless a decade hence, but a force of men, bold, well-trained, disciplined, and patriotic, with a good tradition of service ever being passed on by the older to the younger, always will be a nation's most efficient protection. When a naval force is backed by a whole people, resolute, constant in purpose, with clear and accurate information as to the conditions under which their country holds its footing in the world, it becomes permissible for its writers to devote attention to questions of *matériel*. But when a nation like Canada is only beginning to turn its attention to the subject, when interest is slight and information is lacking, it is worse than useless to fix our eyes upon elaborate apparatus; it is only when men are concerned—living, breathing, human men, and men of our own kin—that the country really will pay heed to the problem.

At the outset we must face a perplexity. We have seen that a torpedo flotilla would be the best protection to our coasts. Now torpedo service presents certain peculiarities which may be set down as follows:

1. Torpedo vessels are fragile boxes of machinery. Susceptible in any event to accident, in order to fulfil their purpose they must be worked under conditions of speed, company, fog, storm, and darkness which increase the likelihood of mishap.

2. The work is wearing, harassing and dangerous to an unusual degree, and also is highly technical. The men who are to man these ships must be specially well-trained, and must be exceptionally good men as regards physique, nerve and *morale*. Nearly all the crew of a de-