

TRAINING OF NAVAL OFFICERS

MR. CARLYON BELLAIRS in his two articles in the October and February numbers of the MONTHLY REVIEW states that he writes in the interest of the renown of our navy, and his contention is that naval officers are not trained for war.

The human element he truly says is the discriminating factor in every war, and he quotes history and poetry to prove that only those who go down to the sea in ships are capable of learning "the secrets of the sea," and of ruling on the main.

These are somewhat elementary propositions, though it is true that they are often forgotten, as was shown by a writer in the *Revue des deux mondes* a few months ago who proposed to invade England with an army of sea-sick soldiers who were to cross the Channel in numerous small steamboats! Mr. Bellairs complains that we are drifting in the wrong direction, that our teaching is too "academic," that naval training has been handed over to "the schoolmasters and arm-chair strategists," and that the gulf is widening between the traditions and practice of Nelson and what is inculcated at the present time.

These are grave charges, and the first question which presents itself is whether Mr. Bellairs is a competent judge of what our training should be, and what his claims are to pose as our naval mentor.