

PREFACE.

The prime conception in a book on naval development has to depend, in an especial manner, upon the point of view of the writer. He might be a sailor. In that case it would be expected that the development of the aptitudes and characters of the seamen would be prominent. The difference between the able seaman of 1800 and the able seaman of 1900, and between the officers of the great navies of these two periods might be brought out so as to mark the advance in knowledge and, to some extent perhaps, in personal character in both officers and men. Or the book might have been entrusted to a marine engineer. He would find his craft suddenly brought on the scene at the beginning of the nineteenth century and growing so rapidly in importance that at its close he might regard himself as being able to build the ship, to drive her, and to command her in action with an enemy. Dependence upon the wind and upon sails for locomotion is so primitive a conception that he might be expected to speak of development only in terms of the power of steam machinery and of the results it has achieved and may yet achieve.

What has been done is to entrust it to a ship-builder who has helped to build line-of-battle ships having no dependence upon steam, except in the galley coppers; and in later years other and far larger ships, dependent upon steam not only for their pro-