

and the boys trained in the Royal Navy, including pay, a free kit, and the dozen and one things we give them, cost somewhat under £10 per year. I made a little calculation the other day, and I am perfectly certain of this,—if you can put the boys into properly organised training ships, with sufficient supervision and properly conducted, making due allowance for all expenses, you could train them for from £28 to £30 a year a head, and one year is ample. Allowing for paying a premium for sending light-made boys to sea, say £10,—from £38 to £40 a head—you could turn out very good, and well trained boys, boys, the bulk of whom would be received gladly on board your merchant ships, and who would be from the first able to earn at any rate their food, if not their wage. These are the style of lads we ought to turn out; they should be respectable and physically sound, able lads. None should be taken under fifteen, and none kept more than a year, for there is a great deal of sentiment about sea service, and if you keep a boy too long in a training ship you send him to sea with all the spunk gone out of him. He is like a bottle of champagne that has been uncorked too long, there is no sparkle left, and the chances are ten to one that he deserts the first opportunity. These are my views about boys.

I touched upon the question of a third class reserve. It is a very serious thing for one to differ with his superiors, and perhaps it is a great piece of impertinence on my part to do so, but I cannot understand their making it a *sine quâ non*, that a boy should have two years' training, when one is ample, and offering £25 for what they know must cost at least £50. The third class reserve is a mistake. It is a matter of no importance to the Admiralty or the country where the men for the reserve come from. Let us draw our reserve from the best merchant seamen who present themselves, let us put as it were, into the sea the spawn, and let us draw from sea the fish, but have nothing to do with them in the meantime. Let the men come from any source, you know that to keep up the number of men in your reserve you owe the Merchant Service so many thousands of boys; put them, therefore, into the Merchant Service and draw out your full-grown sailor as you require or can get him. I can see no better plan than the one I advocated in this theatre myself for improving the royal seamen and the reserve, whilst at the same time linking the Merchant Service with the Royal Navy, which I think, is a most important matter for the country. I cannot understand how we are to expect, in time of war, that you are going to utilize your Naval Reserve men, brought up as at present with totally different ideas,—men who know nothing whatever of your ships or discipline, who, as was once said by a gallant Admiral, never have seen anything of a man-of-war but their outside; how are you going to get these men to work harmoniously with your continuous service men, a totally different class? they are perfectly distinct classes; the merchant seamen will be placed under men-of-war's men who have different sympathies and ideas, and if they work well together for the benefit of the service, it will be a perfect miracle. But the case would be very different if we took steps to link the two together. I want to see class prejudice broken down. I think Mr. Donald Currie told us in the last discussion the Merchant Service objected to Naval Officers, and another gentleman told us that there was no sympathy between the merchant sailor and the man-of-war's man. That I have always held to be the case, and I said so in this theatre some time ago. I knew it to be the case, and I think it is a very great pity it should be so, and the first way to break down such a dangerous feeling is to carry out the system I proposed before; that there should be an interchangeableness between the two services. I do not believe in this tremendous deterioration of merchant seamen, or the impossibility of getting the small number of men we should require; I believe there are as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it, though the number may be less; I believe we have a certain percentage of thoroughly able men in the merchant service, and no person who knows anything about seamen will expect that every man

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fine well-trained respectable lads. They are never kept more than a year under training, or entered under 15 years of age. They cost about £25 each to train. I am also informed that the "Chichester's" and "Arethusa's" boys are not kept more than one year under training, but I have seen less of them than the others.