

as I have, the effects of a similar tension, albeit infinitely less acute, during the mimic warfare of naval manœuvres. But the psychological calculation, astute though it be, is not irrefragable. It has its counterpoise for the harbour-sheltered fleet in the divorce of the latter from the real business of the sea—in the dull monotonous round of routine duties listlessly carried on, because they have none of the actuality even of peace-exercises at sea, and none of the uplifting of the spirit which the confident hope of conflict with the enemy engenders and sustains. The story of the old wars tells us that the sea-nurtured fleet was always in better fettle for fighting than the harbour-sheltered fleet, and though many things have changed since Nelson and his comrades bore the strain and weathered it—bore it and weathered it for months and even years at a stretch—there is no reason to think that the children of Nelson will prove less stout in endurance than their sires. The strain is undoubtedly far more intense in these days, but it is certain to be far less prolonged. Meanwhile, the British seaman's strength lies in the consciousness of his hold on the sea, and the conviction that its mastery is his.

This, then, is the proper point of view from which to regard the doings of the Allied Fleets during the present war. Μέγα γὰρ τὸ τῆς θαλάσσης κράτος, as Pericles told the Athenians. Great is the power of the sea. Nor has the moral of this pregnant saying ever been better pointed than by Admiral Mahan, many years ago, in those memorable words, which might well seem to have been written to suit the present occasion: 'They were dull, weary, eventless months, those months of waiting and watching of the big ships before the French arsenals. Purposeless they surely seemed to many, but they saved England. The world