

of their class belonging to other nations, and will, I hope, supersede those infinite varieties with which our Navy has hitherto abounded, and which have, from their diversity of equipment, formed a source of perpetual expense and perplexity in our dock-yards, as well as a constant obstacle to that uniform system which we have been endeavouring to establish since 1832, with respect to the masts, yards, &c. throughout the service.

With respect to our smaller vessels, it has now become so obvious that almost all the duties required from them during former wars must in future devolve on steamers, that it would, in my opinion, be an unjustifiable expense to keep up so large an establishment as heretofore. The protection of our coasts and coasting trade will be confided entirely to steamers, and on all foreign stations they will also, in all probability, gradually supersede small sailing vessels. Our best policy will, therefore, be to avoid increasing the number of sloops and small brigs beyond the actual wants of the service during peace, and to confine our new constructions to brigs of the largest class, the only ones now equal to those of other nations. Our future Navy would then consist of one class of three deckers, one (or at most two classes) of two-deckers; one of large frigates; one of twenty-eight gun corvettes; and one of eighteen gun brigs.

We have still so much to learn with respect to steam vessels, that I will not venture to offer any decided opinion upon the classes and dimensions to