

You may get back the men after a time, but you cannot get them back at once. Your battles in future will be decided in months and not in years. Train them largely; make the article everybody requires, and leave the disposition of it, shall I say to fate or to the inclinations of the seaman? You will always find him when he is required, if you give him enough of that prospect or possibility of prize-money, that possibility of active service in which the true seaman delights, that possibility of serving under good Officers of his own choosing which existed formerly, not being tied like sheep and sent on board a certain ship on which he neither knows nor approves of the Officers. The present system does not allow the Officers to become acquainted with the men or the men with the Officers. You discharge the men and turn them adrift in many instances, where you ought to keep them on, and only those great owners of the Mercantile Marine have succeeded thoroughly who have adopted the old system of having good men and keeping them at whatever price. It is not cheap to have bad men. It is not possible to elevate any one good man while in contact with a great number of bad men. You cannot raise an apprentice into the proper condition in which you wish him to exist, of morality, abedience, and discipline, if you keep him during his youth largely in contact with those who know neither the one nor the other. The Navy is the place for proper training, and I am quite sure the Mercantile Marine will be delighted to receive from us such men as we should, under these conditions, send to them. We have to unteach so much to the mercantile seaman at present when he comes to us, that it takes us much more than a year to do that. We find it difficult enough in six years to teach men all that they are required to do on board men-of-war, and it is not to be supposed by one year's contact with a man-of-war, that a man would be deprived of those habits which are most objectionable in that situation of life: still less could we depend upon him for that *solidarité*, that feeling of ship-mate-ship which is only acquired after many years' service together. A man when he goes into action relies on his right or left hand man in proportion as he knows him, and the way to make them rely on each other is to train them carefully together in a body. We shall never do better than by recurring to many of our old principles, notably that of the apprenticeship system. I do not regard it as a hardship or objectionable in any way, that the apprenticeship system should be again enforced, even if there are to be apprentices on board steamers. If, as seems probable, a large proportion of our carrying trade should be done in steamers, it is as necessary that there should be apprentices to steam-work as that there should be others in sailing vessels, and I am quite sure the flow from the school ships into the Navy, and thence into the Mercantile Marine, can be kept up so as to fulfil the most desirable object of combining the two services together, but not by going from the inferior service to the superior, but from the superior to the inferior,—inferior, that is to say, in habits of discipline, I do not say in anything else. As regards the Officers, if we had young Officers fit to put by the side of our sub-lieutenants, to send on board men-of-war in an emergency, possibly the Naval Reserve Officer might be made equally efficient in a very short time as the Naval Officer. But we have to deal with a close service, in which a man must serve constantly to be efficient, and you would scarcely tempt men at the age of thirty or forty, after long experience in the Mercantile Marine, to take their place beside sub-lieutenants or lieutenants in a man-of-war. I think these observations will show that my chief object is to make a proper junction of the Mercantile Marine and the Navy, but to do it by passing from the Navy to the Mercantile Marine, by manufacturing the article and then passing it on. I have also observed in a previous pamphlet of mine, the means by which the men so acquired, if you desire to have Reserves, can be retained by one ever-lengthening chain. If you give to the seaman a very small fee per annum, accruing to him only when he comes back to the Navy, he will come back to the Navy whenever you want him. If you give to Mercantile Officers the same training in the Navy as they give in the French Service, that is to say, training in youth from fourteen to sixteen, and then pass them on to the Mercantile Marine, I think the Mercantile Marine would not find reason to regret the change.

Admiral Sir WILLIAM KING HALL: Captain Wilson having alluded to training ships not in the service in disparaging terms, I, having been on the "Chichester" and "Aretusa" Committee for the last ten years, believe that none