

usually assume on the part of naval officers a practical acquaintance with trading methods, knowledge of this kind is almost of necessity beyond the scope or opportunity of most of them. None the less, the arduous and highly responsible duties involved by hostilities affecting ocean commerce require almost as their foundation just such knowledge. Not only do the system and methods of ocean trading in times of peace need a proper understanding, but inasmuch as the outbreak of war gives rise to new conditions and imposes on traders special obligations, these also should be understood.

Therefore, to my summary of the process of ocean trade and of the methods of ocean traders in times of peace, I have added some reflections on the situation which may be expected to arise on the sudden outbreak of war and during the progress of the subsequent hostilities. And more especially I have endeavoured to review the obligations of neutral masters as regards the papers then to be carried by them and the information which they must be ready to afford on lawful demand of belligerent naval officers.

In the by-gone days of prolonged hostilities at sea the obligations of neutral carriers were well enough understood, but since then not only have the laws of maritime warfare themselves been modified to the advantage of the neutral flag, but altered conditions of ocean communication, of trade and of finance have materially affected the data which so frequently served as foundation for the old-time Prize Court judgments. The subject generally involves problems of no small importance—problems of which the solution is not for an occasion such as this. They must, however, be some day dealt with, and to indicate such as have suggested themselves may serve at any rate as a first step on the road.

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