the language of signals, a language by writing, addresſed to the eye, and which he that runneth may read. As in common writing certain arbitrary marks are agreed on to expreſs certain founds uſed in ſpeech, or rather, as in hieroglyphics certain arbitrary marks are agreed on to expreſs certain thoughts, or the ſubjects of theſe thoughts ; ſo here certain exhibitions are made, which are agreed on to expreſs certain movements to be exe­cuted by the commander to whom they are addreſſed, and all are enjoined to keep their eyes fixed on the ſhip of the conductor of the fleet, that they may learn his will.

It is ſcarcely poſſible for any number of ſhips to act in concert, without ſome ſuch mode of communication between the general and the commanders of private ſhips. We have no direct information of this cir­cumſtance in the naval tactics of the ancient nations, the Greeks and Romans ; yet the neceſſity of the thing is ſo apparent, that we cannot ſuppoſe it to have been omitted by the moſt ingenious and the moſt cultivated people who have appeared on the great theatre of the world; and we are perſuaded that Themiſtocles, Conon, and other renowned ſea commanders of Athens, had lignais by which they directed the movements of their fleets. We read, that when Ægeus ſent his son Theſeus to Crete, it was agreed on, that if the ſhip ſhould bring the young prince back in ſafety, a white flag ſhould be diſplayed. But thoſe on board, in their joy for reviſiting their country after their perilous voyage, forgot to hoiſt the concerted ſignal. The anxious father was every day expecting the ſhip which ſhould bring back his darling ſon, and had gone to the ſhore to look out for her. He ſaw her, but without the ſignal agreed on. On which the old man threw himſelf into the ſea. We find, too, in the hiſtory of the Punic wars by Poly­bius, frequent alluſions to ſuch a mode of communica­tion ; and Ammianus Marcellinus ſpeaks of the s*peculatores* and *vexillarii,* who were on board the ſhips in the Adriatic. The coins both of Greece and Rome exhibit both flags and ſtreamers. In ſhort, we cannot doubt of the ancients having practiſed this hieroglyphi­cal language. It is somewhat ſurpriſing that Lord Dud­ley, in his A*rcanο del Mare,* in which he makes an oſtentatious diſplay of his knowledge of every thing con­nected with the ſea ſervice, makes no expreſs mention of this very eſſential piece of knowledge, although he must, by his long reſidence in Italy, have known the marine diſcipline of the Venetians and Genoeſe, the greateſt maritime powers then in Europe.

In the naval occurrences of modern Europe, men­tion is frequently made of ſignals. Indeed, as we have already obſerved, it ſeems impoſſible for a number of ſhips to act in any kind of concert, without ſome me­thod of communication. Numberleſs ſituations muſt occur, when it would be impoſſible to convey orders or information by meſſengers from one ſhip to another, and coaſt and alarm ſignals had long been practiſed by every nation. The idea was, therefore, familiar. We find, in particular, that Queen Elizabeth, on occaſion of the expedition to Cadiz, ordered her ſecretaries to draw up inſtructions, which were to be communicated to the admiral, the general, and the five counſellors of war, and by them to be copied and transmitted to the ſeveral ſhips of the navy, not to be opened till they ſhould arrive in a certain latitude. It was on this oc­caſion, (ſays our hiſtorian Guthrie), “ *that we meet*

*with the first regular ſets of ſignals and orders to the commanders of the English fleet.* But, till the movements of a fleet have attained ſome sort of uniformity, regu­lated and connected by ſome principles of propriety, and agreed on by persons in the habit of directing a number of ſhips, we may with confidence affirm that ſignals would be nothing but a parcel of arbitrary marks, appropriated to particular pieces of naval ſer­vice, ſuch as attacking the enemy, lauding the ſoldiers, &c. ; and that they would be conſidered merely as re­ferring to the final reſult, but by no means pointing out the mode of execution, or directing the movements which were neceſſary for performing it.

It was James II. when duke of York, who firſt conſidered this practice as capable of being reduced in­to a ſyſtem, and who law the importance of ſuch a compoſition. He, as well as the king his brother, had always ſhowed a great predilection for the ſea ſervice ; and, when appointed admiral of England, he turned his whole attention to its improvement. He had ſtudied the art of war under Turenne, not as a paſtime, but as a ſcience, and was a favourite pupil of that moſt accompliſhed general. Turenne one day pointed him out, ſaying, “ Behold one who will be one of the firſt princes and greateſt generals of Europe.” When admiral of England, he endeavoured to introduce into the maritime ſervice all thoſe principles of concert and arrangement which made a number of individual regi­ments and ſquadrons compoſe a great army. When he commanded in the Dutch war, he found a fleet to be little better than a collection of ſhips, on board of each of which the commander and his ſhip’s company did their beſt to annoy the enemy, but with very little de­pendence on each other, or on the orders of the Gene­ral ; and in the different actions which the Engliſh fleet had with the Dutch, every thing was confuſion as ſoon as the battle began. It is remarkable that the famous pensionary De Witt, who from a ſtateſenan became a na­vigator and a great ſea commander in a few weeks, made the ſame repreſentation to the States General on his re­turn from his firſt campaign.

In the memoirs of James II. written by himſelf, we have the following paſſage : “ 1665. On the 15th of March the duke of York went to Gunfleet, the gene­ral rendezvous of the fleet, and haſtened their equip­ment. He ordered all the flag officers on board with him every morning, to agree on the order of battle and rank. In former battles, no order was kept, and this under the duke of York was the firſt in which fighting in a line and regular form of battle was obſerved.”

This muſt be conſidered as full authority for giving the duke of York the honour of the invention. For whatever faults may be laid to the charge of this unfor­tunate prince, his word and honour stands unimpeached. And we are anxious to vindicate his claim to it, becauſe our neighbours the French, as uſual, would take the me­rit of this invention, and oſ the whole of naval tactics, to themſelves. True it is, that Colbert, the great and juſtly celebrated miniſter of Louis XIV. created a navy for his ambitious and vain-glorious maſter, and gave it a conſtitution which may be a model for other nations to copy. By his encouragement, men of the greateſt ſcientific eminence were engaged to contribute to its improvement : and they gave us the firſt treatiſes of naval evolutions. But it muſt ever be remembered, that our accompliſhed, though miſguided sovereign, was then