In the first order of sailing, the fleet is ranged on one of the lines of bearing, and each ſhip fleering the same courſe. Thus, in fig I. let the wind be north, and the fleet ranged on the starboard line of bearing, and let the ships steer any courte, as ſouth-west. In this case, the fleet is ready to form the line on the starboard tack by hauling the wind. Again, let the fleet be ranged on the larboard line of bearing, and steering the same course as before, as in fig. 2. ; then the fleet is in a position ready to form the line on the larboard tack, by tacking.

In a numerous fleet this method of sailing is defective ; as the fleet will be too much extended, and therefore the communication between the van and the rear rendered more difficult than when in a more connected order. It is of uſe, however, when the enemy is in sight, as then the fleet may be readily formed in order of battle ; and in that case only, or in passing through a strait, will it be necessary to range the fleet in this order.

In the second order of failing the fleet is ranged on a line perpendicular to the direction of the wind, and steering any proper course. This order, which is repreſented in fig. 3. has the same defects as the former ; and has alſo this diſadvantage attending it, that the fleet cannot safely tack in ſuccession from this order, as each ſhip at the time of tacking is in danger of falling on board the ſhip next astern ; and therefore, if the line is close, the ſhip astern must bear up considerably, in order to avoid being on board the ſhip a- head, which at that time is in stays.

The third order of sailing is that in which the whole fleet is close-hauled, ranged upon the two lines or lines of bear­ing, and therefore containing an angle of twelve points ; the admiral’s ſhip being at the angular point, and the whole fleet steering the same courte. Thus, in fig. 4. the wind being supposed north, and the fleet close-hauled on the starboard tack : Then A being the admiral’s ſhip, one part of the fleet bears from him west-north-west, and the other part east-north-east.

This order of sailing is no doubt preferable to either of the former, as the ſhips are more collected, and can more distinctly perceive and obey the signals ; but if the fleet is numerous, it will be too much extended.

In the fourth order of sailing, the fleet is divided into six. or more columns, as may be judged necessary : by which means the fleet is much more connected than in any of the former orders. The commanders, ranged upon the two lines of bearing, have their squadrons astern of them upon two lines parallel to the direction of the wind ; the first ſhips of each column being, with respect to the commander of their squadron, the one on his starboard and the other on his larboard quarter. The distance between the columns ſhould, how­ever, be ſuch, that the fleet may readily reduce itself to the third order of sailing, and from that to the order of battle. This order is adapted for fleets or convoys crossing the ocean, and is repreſented in fig. 5. But as it requires much time to reduce a fleet from this order to that of battle, it is therefore defective when in pretence of an enemy.

The fifth and last order of sailing is that in which the fleet is divided into three columns close-hauled, and there­fore parallel to each other ; and alſo the respective ſhips abreast of each other. The van commonly forms the weather column ; the centre division, the middle column ; and the rear division, the lee-column. Circumstances may however require the van to be the lee-column, and the rear the weather column. If the fleet is very numerous, each diviſion may be divided into two columns ; and each admiral is to place himſelf at a little distance before, and in the direc­tion of the middle of his division. Fig. 6. and 7. repreſent this order of sailing.

The distance between any ſhip and that adjacent to it in the same column, and alſo the interval between the columns, are regulated by the commander in chief according to circumstances. The interval or perpendicular distance between the columns is commonly taken ; ſuch as, that the angle con­tained between the line of the columns and an imaginary line joining one of the extreme ſhips of that column, and the ſhip at the other extremity of the adjacent column, may be about two points. The meaſure of this angle must how­ever depend in part upon the length of the column ; and when it is determined upon, the distance between the columns may be found by multiplying the length of one of the columns by the tangent of the above angle to the radius unity : whence, if that angle be taken equal to two points, the length of a column multiplied by the decimal .414 will give the distance between the columns. Thus let a column contain six ſhips ; let the distance between each be 100 fa­thoms ; and the length of each ſhip from the extremity of the bowsprit to the Hern 46 fathoms ; then the whole length of the column will be 776 fathoms. Now the above angle being taken equal to two points, the distance between the columns is equal to 776×.414=321 1/4 fathoms.

The order of battle is formed by drawing up the ſhips of the fleet in a line nearly close-hauled, and under an eaſy sail; each ſhip being at a certain assigned distance from that next ahead, as a half or a whole cable’s length. The fire-ſhips, with frigates ahead and astern, form a line parallel to the former, and to the windward of it if the enemy is to the leeward; but to the leeward if the enemy is to the windward. Without this line another is formed, parallel thereto, of the store-ſhips, &c. with frigates ahead and astern. Fig. 8. repreſents the order of battle, the fleet being on the starboard tack.

In retreating from a ſuperior force, it is necessary to draw up the fleet in ſuch an order that it may, with the greatest advantage, oppoſe or annoy the fast sailing vessels of the enemy : for this purpoſe, the order of retreat commonly ta­ken is that which is the inverse of the third order of sailing. As the fleet generally runs before the wind, the ſhips of the line are therefore ranged on the two lines of bearing ; hence these lines contain an angle equal to 135 degrees. The ad­miral is at the angular point, and the frigates, tranſports, &c. are included within the wings to leeward. In place of running before the wind, the fleet may take any other pro­per direction ; but still the angle contained by the wings is to be 135⁰. This order of retreat is repreſented in fig. 9.

The order of convoy is that in which the ſhips are all in the wake of one another, steering on the same point of the compaſs, and forming a right line. If the fleet is numerous, it may be divided into three columns, which are to be ran­ged parallel to each other, that of the admiral occupying the middle, and all steering the same courte.

Having defined the different orders of sailing, we ſhall now proceed to ſhow the method of getting a fleet under way, and of bringing it to an anchor.

In order to get a fleet under way, the lee-column is to get under way first, and bring to all at the same time, just as they find themſelves after casting. The centre column is then to perform the same manœuvre, and call likewiſe as ſoon as the other column is brought to ; and both columns will remain in that position till the weather column, which is still apeak, having weighed, ſhall be alſo under way. The three columns may often be got under way all at once : but to execute this the fleet must all act together, and with equal ardour ; for the weather ſhips must not, at any rate, be under way before the lee ones. If it be necessary to get immediately in order of battle, the weather columns are at once to bear away two points together, that they may take their posts in the line of battle ahead of the lee-column.