best, indeed—as Mahan has shown us—the only effective way of attaining this object is to treat the matter historically. What­ever date we may agree to assign to the formation of the term itself, the idea—as we have seen—is as old as history. It is not intended to give a condensed history of sea-power, but rather an analysis of the idea and what it contains, illustrating this analysis with examples from history ancient and modern. It is important to know that it is not something which originated in the middle of the 17th century, and having seriously affected history in the 18th, ceased to have weight till Captain Mahan appeared to comment on it in the last decade of the 19th. With a few masterly touches Mahan, in his brief allusion to the second Punic war, has illustrated its importance in the struggle between Rome and Carthage. What has to be shown is that the principles which he has laid down in that case, and in cases much more modern, are true and have been true always and everywhere. Until this is perceived there is much history which cannot be understood, and yet it is essential to the welfare of Great Britain as a maritime power that she should understand it thoroughly. Her failure to understand it has more than once brought her, if not to the verge of destruction, at any rate within a short distance of serious disaster.

The high antiquity of decisive naval campaigns is among the most interesting features of international conflicts. Nothwithstanding the much greater frequency of land wärs, the course of history has been profoundly changed more often by contests on the water. That this has not received the notice it deserved is true, and Mahan tells us why. “ Historians generally, ” he says, “ have been unfamiliar with the conditions of the sea, having as to it neither special interest nor special knowledge; and the profound determining influence of maritime strength on great issues has consequently been overlooked. ” Moralizing on that which might have been is admittedly a sterile process; but it is some­times necessary to point, if only by way of illustration, to a possible alternative. As in modern times the fate of India and the fate of North America were determined by sea-power, so also at a very remote epoch sea-power decided whether or not Hellenic colonization was to take root in, and Hellenic culture to dominate, central and northern Italy as it dominated southern Italy, where traces of it are extant to this day. A moment’s consideration will enable us to see how different the history of the world would have been had a Hellenized city grown and prospered on the Seven HilIs. Before the Tarquins were driven out of Rome a Phocaean fleet was encountered (537 b.c.) off Corsica by a combined force of Etruscans and Phoenicians, and was so handled that the Phocaeans abandoned the island and settled on the coast of Lucania (Mommsen, *Hist. Rome,* English trans. i. p. 153). The enterprise of their navigators had built up for the Phoenician cities and their great off-shoot Carthage, a sea-power which enabled them to gain the practical sovereignty of the sea to the west of Sardinia and Sicily. The control of these waters was the object of prolonged and memorable struggles, for on it— as the result showed—depended the empire of the world. From very remote times the consolidation and expansion, from within outwards, of great continental states have had serious consequences for mankind when they were accompanied by the acquisition of a coast-line and the absorption of a. maritime population. We shall find that the process loses none of its importance in recent years. “ The ancient empires, ” says the historian of Greece, Ernst Curtius, “ as long as no foreign elements had intruded into them, had an invincible horror of the water.” When the condition, which Curtius notices in parentheses, arose the “ horror ” disappeared. There is something highly significant in the uniformity of the efforts of Assyria, Egypt, Babylon and Persia to get possession of the maritime resources of Phoenicia. Our own immediate posterity will perhaps have to reckon with the results of similar efforts in our own day. It is this which gives a living interest to even the very ancient history of sea-power, and makes the study of it of great practical importance to us now. We shall see, as we go on, how the phenomena connected with it reappear with striking regularity in successive periods. Looked

at in this light the great conflicts of former ages are full of useful, indeed necessary, instruction.

In the first and greatest of the contests waged by the nations of the East against Europe—the Persian wars—sea-power was the governing factor. Until Persia had expanded to the shores of the Levant the European Greeks had little to fear from the ambition of the great king. The conquest of Egypt by Cambyses had shown how formidable that ambition could be when supported by an efficient navy. With the aid of the naval forces of the Phoenician cities the Persian invasion of Greece was rendered comparatively easy. It was the naval contingents from Phoenicia which crushed the Ionian revolt. The expedition of Mardonius, and still more that of Datis and Artaphernes, had indicated the danger threatening Greece when the master of a great army was likewise the master of a great navy. Their defeat at Marathon was not likely to, and as a matter of fact did not, discourage the Persians from further attempts at aggression. As the advance of Cambyses into Egypt had been flanked by a fleet, so also was that of Xerxes into Greece. By the good fortune sometimes vouchsafed to a people, which, owing to its obstinate opposition to, or neglect of, a wise policy, scarcely deserves it, there appeared at Athens an influential citizen who understood all that was meant by the term sea-power. Themistocles saw more clearly than any of his contemporaries that, to enable Athens to play a leading part in the Hellenic world, she needed above all things a strong navy. “ He had already in his eye the battle-field of the future.” He felt sure that the Persians would come back, and come with such forces that resistance in the open field would be out of the question. One scene of action remained—the sea. Persuaded by him the Athenians increased their navy, so that of the 271 vessels comprising the Greek fleet at Artemisium, 147 had been provided by Athens, which also sent a large reinforcement after the first action. Though no one has ever surpassed Themistocles in the faculty of correctly estimating the importance of sea-power, it was understood by Xerxes as clearly as by him that the issue of the war depended upon naval operations. The arrangements made under the Persian monarch’s direction, and his very personal movements, show that this was his view. He felt, and probably expressed the feeling, exactly as—in the war of American Independence—Washington did in the words, “ What- ever efforts are made by the land armies, the navy must have the casting vote in the present contest.” The decisive event was the naval action of Salamis. To have made certain of success, the Persians should have first obtained a command of the Aegean, as complete for all practical purposes as the French and English had of the sea generally in the war against Russia of 1854-56. The Persian sea-power was not equal to the task. The fleet of the great king was numerically stronger than that of the Greek allies; but it has been proved many times that naval efficiency does not depend on numerical superiority alone. The choice sections of the Persian fleet were the contingents of the Ionians and Phoenicians. The former were half-hearted or disaffected; while the latter were, at best, not superior in skill, experience, and valour to the Greek sailors. At Salamis Greece was saved not only from the ambition and vengeance of Xerxes, but also and for many centuries from oppression by an Oriental conqueror. Persia did not succeed against the Greeks, not because she had no sea-power, but because her sea-power, artificially built up, was inferior to that which was a natural element of the vitality of her foes. Ionia was lost and Greece in the end enslaved, be­cause the quarrels of Greeks with Greeks led to the ruin of their naval states.

The Peloponnesian was largely a naval war. The confidence of the Athenians in their sea-power had a great deal to do with its outbreak. The immediate occasion of the hostilities, which in time involved so many states, was the oppor­tunity offered by the conflict between Corinth and Corcyra of increasing the sea-power of Athens. Hitherto the Athenian naval predominance had been virtually confined to the Aegean Sea. The Corcyraean envoy, who pleaded for help at Athens, dwelt upon the advantage to be derived by the