expanding nations were to be allowed to extend their activities to territories in the New World. The first two Dutch Wars were to settle the question whether or not the ocean trade of the world was to be open to any people qualified to engage in it. We can see how largely these were maritime questions, how much depended on the solution found for them, and how plain it was that they must

be settled by naval means.

Mahan’s great survey of sea-power opens in 1660, midway between the first and second Dutch Wars. “ The sailing-ship era, with its distinctive features, ” he tells us, “ had fairly begun. ” The art of war by sea, in its more important details, had been settled by the first war.

From the beginning of the second the general features of ship design, the classification of ships, the armament of ships, and the handling of fleets, were to remain without essential alteration until the date of Navarino. Even the tactical methods, except where improved on occasions by individual genius, altered little. The great thing was to bring the whole broadside force to bear on an enemy. Whether this was to be impartially distributed throughout the hostile line or concentrated on one part of it depended on the character of particular admirals. It would have been strange if a period so long and so rich in incidents had afforded no materials for forming a judgment on the real signific­ance of sea-power. The text, so to speak, chosen by Mahan is that, notwithstanding the changes wrought in naval *matériel* since about 1850, we can find in the history of the past instructive illustrations of the general principles of maritime war. These illustrations will prove of value not only “ in those wider opera- tions which embrace a whole theatre of war,” but also, if rightly applied, “ in the tactical use of the ships and weapons ” of our own day. By a remarkable coincidence the same doctrine was being preached at the same time and quite independently by Vice-Admiral Philip Colomb in his work on *Naυal Warfare.* As a prelude to the second Dutch War we find a repetition of a process which had been adopted somewhat earlier. That was the permanent conquest of trans-oceanic territory. Until the 17th century had well begun, naval, or combined naval and military, operations against the distant possessions of an enemy had been practically restricted to raiding or plundering attacks on commercial centres. The Portuguese territory in South America having come under Spanish dominion in consequence of the annexation of Portugal to Spain, the Dutch—as the power of the latter country declined—attempted to reduce part of that territory into permanent possession. This improvement on the practice of Drake and others was soon seen to be a game at which more than one could play. An expedition sent by Crom­well to the West Indies seized the Spanish island of Jamaica, which has remained in the hands of its conquerors to this day. In 1664 an English force occupied the Dutch North American settlements on the Hudson. Though the dispossessed rulers were not quite in a position to throw stones at sinners, this was rather a raid than an operation recognized warfare, because it preceded the formal outbreak of hostilities. The conquered territory remained in English hands for more than a century, and thus testified to the efficacy of a sea-power which Europe had scarcely begun to recognize. Neither the second nor the third Dutch War can be counted amongst the occurrences to which Englishmen may look back with unalloyed satisfaction; but they, unquestionably, disclosed some interesting manifesta­tions of sea-power. Much indignation has been expressed concerning the corruption and inefficiency of the Engh\*sh government of the day, and its failure to take proper measures for keeping up the navy as it should have been kept up. Some, perhaps a good deal, of this indignation was deserved; but it would have been nearly as well deserved by every other government of the day. Even in those homes of political virtue where the administrative machinery was worked by, or in the interest of speculating capitalists and privileged companies, the accumu- lating evidence of late years has proved that everything was not considered to be, and as a matter of fact was not, exactly as it ought to have been. Charles II. and his brother, the duke of

York, have been held up to obloquy because they thought that the coast of England could be defended against a naval enemy better by fortifications than by a good fleet and, as Pepys noted, were “ not ashamed of it. ” The truth is that neither the king nor the duke believed in the power of a navy to ward off attack from an island. This may have been due to want of intellectual capacity; but it would be going a long way to put it down to personal wickedness. They have had many imitators, some in our own day. The huge forts which stud the coast of the United Kingdom, and have been erected within living memory, are monuments, likely to last for many years, of the inability of people, whom no one could accuse of being vicious, to rate sea- power at its proper value. It is much more likely that it was owing to a reluctance to study questions of naval defence as industriously as they deserved, and to that moral timidity which so often tempts even men of proved physical courage to undertake the impossible task of making themselves absolutely safe against hostile efforts at every point.

Charles II. has also been charged with indifference to the interests of his country, or worse, because during a great naval war he adopted the plan of trying to weaken the enemy by destroying his commerce. The king “ took a fatal resolution of laying up his great ships and keeping only a few frigates on the cruise.” It is expressly related that this was not Charles’s own idea, but that it was urged upon him by advisers whose opinion probably seemed at the time as well worth listening to as that of others. Anyhow if the king erred, as he undoubtedly did, he erred in good company. Eighteen hundred years earlier the statesmen who conducted the great war against Carthage, and whose astuteness has been the theme of innumer­able panegyrics since, took the same “ fatal resolution.” In the midst of the great struggle they “ did away with the fleet. At the most they encouraged privateering; and with that view placed the war-vessels of the state at the disposal of captains who were ready to undertake a corsair warfare on their own account ” (Mommsen, 1894, ii. 191). In much later times this method has had many respectable defenders. Mahan’s works are, in a sense, a formal warning to his fellow-citizens not to adopt it. In France, within the last years of the 19th century, it found, and appears still to find, adherents enough to form a school. The reappearance of belief in demonstrated impossibilities is a recognized incident in human history; but it is usually confined to the emotional or the vulgar. It is serious and filled with menaces of disaster when it is held by men thought fit to administer the affairs of a nation or advise concern­ing its defence. The third Dutch War may not have settled directly the position of England in the maritime world; but it helped to place that country above all other maritime states— in the position, in fact, which Great Britain, the United Kingdom, the British Empire, whichever name may be given it, has retained up to the present. It also manifested in a very striking form the efficacy of sea-power. The United Provinces, though attacked by two of the greatest monarchies in the world, France and England, were not destroyed. Indeed, they preserved much of their political importance in the state system of Europe. The Republic “ owed this astonishing result partly to the skill of one or two men, but mainly to its sea-power. ” The effort, however, had undermined its strength and helped forward its decline.

The war, which was ended by the Peace of Ryswick in 1697, presents two features of exceptional interest: one was the havoc wrought on English commerce by the enemy; the other was Torrington’s conduct at and after the engagement off Beachy Head. Mahan discusses the former with his usual lucidity. At no time has war against commerce been conducted on a larger scale and with greater results than during this period. England suffered “ infinitely more than in any former war. ” Many of her merchants were ruined; and it is affirmed that the English shipping was reduced to the necessity of sailing under the Swedish and Danish flags. The explanation is that Louis XIV. made great efforts to keep up powerful fleets. The Engh\*sh navy was so fully occupied in watching these that no ships could be spared to protect England’s maritime trade. This is only