reſiding at the court of Louis ; that he had formerly acted in concert with the French as a commander and flag officer, and was at this very time aiding them with his knowledge of ſea affairs. In the memorable day at La Hogue, the gallant Ruſſel, obſerving one of Tourville’s movements, exclaimed, “ There ! they have got Pepys @@\* among them.” This anecdote we give on the authority of a friend, who heard an old and reſpectable officer (Admiral Clinton) say, that he had it from a gentleman who was in the action, and heard the words ſpoken ; and we truſt that our readers will not be displeaſed at having this matter of general opinion eſta­bliſhed on ſome good grounds.

It was on this occaſion, then, that the duke of York made the movements and evolutions of a fleet the ob­ject of his particular ſtudy, reduced them to a ſyſtem, and compoſed that “ Syſtem of Sailing and Fighting Inſtructions,” which has ever ſince been conſidered as the code of diſcipline for the British navy, and which has been adopted by our rivals and neighbours as the foundation of their naval tactics. It does great honour to its author, although its merit will not appear very eminent to a careleſs ſurveyor, on account of that very ſimplicity which conſtitutes its chief excellence. It is unqueſtionably the reſult of much ſagacious reflection and painful combination of innumerable circumſtances, all of which have their influence ; and it is remarkable, that although succeeding commanders have improved the ſubject by ſeveral ſubordinate additions, no change has to this day been made in its general principles or ma­xims of evolution.

Till ſome ſuch code be eſtabliſhed, it is evident that ſignals can be nothing but arbitrary and unconnected hieroglyphics, to be learned by rote, and retained by me­mory, without any exercise of the judgment ; and the acquiſition of this branch of nautical ſkill muſt be a more irkſome talk than that of learning the Chinese writing. But ſuch a code being once ſettled, the cha­racter in which it may be expreſſed becomes a matter of rational diſcuſſion.

Accordingly, the ſailing and fighting inſtructions of the duke of York were accompanied by a ſet of ſignals for directing the chief or moſt frequent movements of the fleet. Theſe alſo were contrived with ſo much judgment, and ſuch attention to diſtinctneſs, ſimplicity, and propriety, that there has hardly been any change found neceſſary ; and they are ſtill retained in the Bri­tiſh navy as the uſual ſignals in all caſes when we are not anxious to conceal our movements from an enemy.

Notwithſtanding this acknowledged merit of the duke of York’s ſignals, it muſt be admitted that great im­provements have been made on this ſubject, conſidered as an art. The art military has, in the courſe of a century paſt, become almoſt an appropriate calling, and has therefore been made the peculiar ſtudy of its profeſſors. Our rivals the French were ſooner, and more formally, placed in this ſituation, and the miniſters of Louis XIV. took infinite and moſt judicious pains to make their military men superior to all others by their academical education. A more ſcientific turn was given to their education, and the aſſiſtance of ſcientific men was liberally given them ; and all the nations of Europe muſt acknowledge ſome obligations to them for information on every thing connected with the art of war. They have attended very much to this ſubject, have greatly improved it, and have even introduced a

new principle into the art ; and by this means have re­duced it to the moſt ſimple form of reference to the code of ſailing and fighting inſtructions, by making the ſignals immediately expreſſive, not of orders, but of ſimple numbers. Theſe numbers being prefixed to the various articles of the code of inſtructions, the officer who sees a signal thrown out by the admiral reads the number, and reports it to his captain, perhaps without knowing to what it relates. Thus ſimplicity and ſecrecy, with an unlimited power of variation, are com­bined. We believe that M. de la Bourdonnais, a brave and intelligent officer, during the war 1758, was the author of this ingenious thought.

We do not propoſe to give a ſyſtem of Britiſh ſig­nals. This would evidently be improper. But we ſhall (how our readers the practicability of this curious lan­guage, the extent to which it may be carried, and the methods which may be practiſed in accompliſhing this purpoſe. This may make it an object of attention to ſcientific men, who can improve it ; and the young offi­cer will not only be able to read the orders of the com­mander in chief, but will not be at a loſs, ſhould cir­cumſtances place him in a ſituation where he muſt iſſue orders to others.

Signals may be divided into,

I. Day Signals.

II. Night Signals ; and,

III. Signals in a Fog.

They muſt alſo be diſtinguiſhed into, 1. Signals of Evolution, addressed to the whole Fleet, or to Squadrons of the fleet, or to Divisions of theſe ſquadrons. 2. Signals of Movements to be made by particular ſhips ; and, 3. Signals of Service, which may be either general or particular.

The great extent of a large fleet, the ſmoke in time of battle, and the ſituation of the commander in chief, wſho is commonly in the midſt of the greateſt confuſion and hotteſt fire, frequently makes it very difficult for the officers of diſtant ſhips to perceive his ſignals with diſtinctneſs, Frigates, therefore, are ſtationed out of the line, to windward or to leeward, whoſe ſole office it is to obſerve the admiral’s ſignals, and inſtantly to repeat them. The eyes of all the ſignal officers in the private ships of war are directed to the repeating frigates, as well as to the admiral ; and the officers of the repeating fri­gate, having no other duty, obſerve the admiral inceſſantly, and, being unembarraſſed by the action, can diſplay the ſignal with deliberation, ſo that it may be very diſtinctly ſeen. Being minutely acquainted with the ſubſtitutions which muſt be made on board the admiral when his maſts and rigging are in diſorder, his (perhaps imperfect) ſignal is exhibited by the repeating frigate in its proper form, ſo as to be eaſily underſtood. And to facilitate this communication, the commanders of the different ſquadrons repeat the ſignals of the commander in chief, and the commanders of diviſion repeat the ſig­nals of the commanders of their ſquadron.

Every evolution ſignal is preceded by a ſignal of ad­vertisement and preparation, which is general, and frequently by a gun, to call attention ; and when all the ſignals have been made which direct the different parts of that evolution, another ſignal is made, which marks the cloſe of the complex ſignal, and divides it from others which may immediately follow it : and as the orders of, the commander in chief may relate either to the movements of the whole fleet, thoſe of a Angle diviſion, or

@@@\*[m] Pepys was secretary to the duke of York.