methods oſ diſtinguishing every ship by the place which ſhe occupies in the fleet, both with reſpect to the whole line, with reſpect to the particular ſquadron, the parti­cular diviſion of that ſquadron, and the particular place in that diviſion. This may be done by a combination of the poſition and colour oſ the pendants and vanes of each ſhip. Thus the colour of the pendants may indi­cate the ſquadron, their poſition or maſt on which they are hoiſted may mark the diviſion of that ſquadron, and a diſtinguiſhing vane may mark the place of the pri­vate ſhip in her own diviſion. The advantages attend­ing this method are many. In a large fleet it would hardly be poſſible for the commander in chief to find a ſufficient variety of ſingle lignais to mark the ſhip to which an order is addreſſed, by hoiſting it along with the ſignal appropriated to the intended movement. But by this contrivance one-third part of theſe ſignals oſ addreſs is ſufficient. It alſo enables the commander in chief to or­der a general change of poſition by a ſingle ſignal, which otherwiſe would require ſeveral. Thus, ſuppoſe that the fore, main, and mizen maſts, are appropriated (with the proper modifications) for exhibiting the ſignals addreſſed to the van, the centre, and the rear squadrons of the fleet, and that a red, a white, and a blue flag, are choſen for the diſtinguiſhing flags of the officers commanding theſe ſquadrons ; then, if the commander in chief ſhall hoiſt a red flag at his mizen top-gallant maſt head, it muſt direct the van ſquadron to take the poſition then occupied by the rear ſquadron, the evolu­tion neceſſary for accompliſhing this end being ſuppoſed known by the commander of the ſquadron, who will immediately make the neceſſary ſignals to the ſqua­dron under his particular direction. In the ſame man­ner, the diſtinguiſhing ſignal for the leading ſhip of a ſquadron being hoiſted along with the ſignal of addreſs to the whole fleet, and the ſignal for any particular ſervice, will cauſe the three or the nine leading ſhips to ex­ecute that order, &c. &c.

All that has been laid hitherto may be conſidered as ſo many preparations for the real iſſuing of orders by the commander in chief. The moſt difficult part of the language remains, viz. to invent a number of ſig­nals which ſhall correſpond to that almoſt infinite va­riety of movements and ſervices which muſt be per­formed.

Diſtinctness, ſimplicity, and propriety, are the three eſſential qualities of all ſignals. A ſignal muſt be ſome object easily ſeen, ſtrongly marked, ſo that it may be readily underſtood, with little risk of its being miſtaken for another. When made by flags, banners, or pen­dants, they muſt be of the fulleſt colours, and ſtrongeſt contrails. The ſhips are frequently at a very great diſtance, ſo that the intervening air occasions a great de­gradation of colour. They are ſeen between the eye and a very variable sky ; and in this ſituation, eſpecially in the morning or evening, or a dark day, it is not easy to diſtinguiſh one full colour from another, all of them approaching to the appearance of a black. At the diſtance of a very few miles hardly any full colours can be diſtinguiſhed but a ſcarlet and a blue. Red, blue, yellow, and white, are the colours which can be diſtin­guiſhed at greater diſtances than any others, and are therefore the only colours admitted as ſignals. Even theſe are ſometimes diſtinguiſhed with difficulty. A yellow is often confounded with a dirty white, and a

blue with a red. All other dark colours are found totally unfit. But as theſe afford but a ſmall variety, we muſt combine them in one flag, by making it ſtriped, ſpotted, or chequered, taking care that the oppoſition of colour may be as great as poſſible, and that the pieces of which the flags are made up may not be too minute. Red muſt never be ſtriped nor ſpotted with blue, and the ſtripes, ſpots, or chequers, ſhould never be leſs than one-third of the breadth of the flag. Plate CCCCLXVI. is a selection by an officer of experience as a let very eaſily recogniſed, and little liable to be con rounded. Their colours are repreiented by hatching, in the same manner as in heraldry (See Heraldry ).

Difference of ſhape, as flags, banners, or pendants, is another diſtinction by which the expreſſion may be varied. And in doing this, we muſt recollect, that in light winds it may be difficult to diſtinguiſh a flag from a banner, as neither are fully displayed for want ot wind to detach the fly from the ſtaff.

And, laſtly, ſignals may be varied by their poſition,; which may be on any lofty and well detached part of the maſts, yards, or rigging.

Simplicity is an eminent property in all ſignals. They are addreſſed to persons not much accuſtomed to com­binations, and who are probably much occupied by other preſſing duties. It were to be wiſhed that every piece of ſervice could be indicated by a ſingle flag. This is peculiarly definable with reſpect to the ſignals uſed in time of battle. The rapid ſuccession of events on this occaſion call for a multitude of orders from the commander in chief, and his ſhip is frequently clad over with flags and pendants, ſo that it is exceedingly dif­ficult for the ſignal officer of a private ſhip to diſtin­guiſh the different groups, each of which make a parti­cular ſignal.

Theſe conſiderations are the foundation of a certain *propriety* in ſignals, which directs us to a choice among marks which appear altogether arbitrary. Signals which run any riſk of being confounded, on account of ſome reſemblance, or becauſe their poſition hinders us from immediately perceiving their difference, ſhould be appropriated to pieces of ſervice which are hardly poſ­ſible to be executed, or can hardly be wanted, in the ſame ſituation. No bad consequence could eaſily result though the ſignal for *coming to cloſer action* ſhould reſemble that for *unmooring,* becauſe the preſent ſituation of the ſhips makes the laſt operation impoſſible or abſurd. Such conſiderations direct us to lelect for battle ſignals, thoſe which are of eaſieſt exhibition, are the moſt ſimple, and have the leaſt dependence on the circum­ſtance of poſition ; ſo that their signification may not be affected by the damages ſuſtained in the maſts or rigging of the flag ſhip. Such ſignals as are leſs eaſily ſeen at a diſtance, ſhould be appropriated to orders which can occur only in the middle of the fleet, &c. &c. Signals which are made to the admiral by pri­vate ſhips may be the ſame with ſignals of command from the flag ſhip, which will conſiderably diminish the number of ſignals perfectly different from each other.

With all theſe attentions and precautions a ſyſtem of ſignals is at laſt made up, fitted to the code of sailing and fighting inſtructions. It is accompanied by ano­ther ſmall ſet for the duty of convoys. It muſt be engroſſed in two books ; one for the officer of the flag ſhip, who is to make the ſignals, and the other is