and having so often been engaged in naval contests, would naturally have produced a number of writers on this, as well as on ſubjects of much less conſequence to it as a nation. The reader will, however, no doubt be ſurpriſed to hear, that we have only one ſcientific treatise on naval tactics, intitled *An Essay on Naval Tactics,* &. by John Clerk, Esq; of Elden, near Edinburgh ; all the other treatises published in Britain on this ſubject being either tranſlations from the French, or remarks upon the French authors @@(a). Some of the principal French treatiſes on naval tactics are the following : 1. *L’Art des Armées Na­vales, ou Traité des Evolutions Navales,* par Paul L’Hoste, 1 vol. folio, printed at Lyons 1727. This book was tranſlated and published by Christopher O’Bryen, Eſq; in 4to, in 1762. 2. *Tactique Navale, ou Traité des Evolutions et des Signaux,* par Μ. le Viscompte de Morogues, 4to, Paris 1763. .3. *Le Manœuvrier,* par Μ. Bourde de Villehuet. 4. *L’Art de Guerre en Mer, ou Tactique Navale, &c.* par Μ. le Viscompte de Grenier. Translations of the two laſt have appeared in Engliſh in 4to in 1788, under the name of the *Chevalier de Sauſeuil* ; and a transtation of parts of the three last is in the 2d vol. of the Elements and Practice of Rigging and Seamanship, published at London in 1794. Other books on evolutions and tactics are, *Théorie de la Manœuvre des Vaiſseaux,* Paris, 1689. *Pitot’s Theory of Working Ships applied to Practice* &c. tranſlated by Stone, 1743. *Manœuvre des Vaisseaux, ou Traité de Mechanique et de Dynamique, &c.* par Μ. Bouguer. *The British Mars,* &c. by William Flexney, 1763. *A Sea Manual,* by Sir Alexander Schomberg, 1789. *A View of the Naval Force of Great Britain,* &c. by an Officer of Rank, 1791, &c.

We ſhall occaſionally conſult all theſe works ; and as ſome of them treat largely of the tactics in preſent uſe, while in others new ſystems are propoſed, our article will naturally be divided into two parts, keeping the preſent practice and propoſed innovations totally distinct from each other.

Part I. The PRESENT SYSTEM of NAVAL TACTICS.

Chap. I. *Of the Orders of Sailing.*

A Fleet of ſhips of war is uſually divided into three diviſions or ſquadrons, called the *centre, van,* and *rear* ; and each ſquadron has a commanding officer. The commander in chief, or admiral of the fleet, is in the centre column ; the vice admiral has the command of the van ; and the rear ad­miral, that of the rear. The ſhips of each ſquadron are distinguiſhed by the poſition of their colours. The ſhips of the first or centre ſquadron carry their pendants at the main­top-gallant mast head. The ſhips of the second division carry their pendants at the fore top-gallant mast head, and thoſe of the third diviſion at the mizen-top mast head. Each ſquadron ought, if poſſible, to consist of the same number of ships ; and alſo to be of the same force, ſo that each may be equally able to attack or repulſe the enemy ; and when in a line, the ſeveral parts will be equally strong. When the fleet is very numerous, each ſquadron is ſometimes ſubdivided in a ſimilar manner into three divisions of centre, van, and rear.

When the fleet is formed in the line or order of battle, each admiral takes his post in the centre of his ſquadron, the commander in chief being in the middle of the line. If the enemy be not in sight, the store-ships, fire-ſhips, sloops, &c. are to be to the windward of the fleet, becauſe they can be more easily ſupported, and can more readily obey the ſignals that may be made to them. There are frigates to the windward of the van and rear of the convoy, for the purpoſe of looking out for the enemy, and keeping thoſe vessels in their proper stations. But if the enemy is in sight, then all thoſe ſhips which are not to be in the line of battle are to be on the other side of the line with reſpect to the enemy. If the fleet is sailing in three columns, the first or centre ſquadron is in the middle between the second and third ſquadrons ; one of which, according to circumstances, forms the starboard and the other the larboard column : and each admiral leads his respective diviſion. If the fleet is destined for ascertain place at a considerable distance, it is generally formed into ſquadrons ; but if cruising in expec­tation of meeting the enemy, the admiral naturally keeps his ſhips in ſuch sailing positions as may be most advanta­geous to form for action as quickly as poſſible. Theſe va­rious positions or arrangements are called *orders* ; and that they may be better understood, it is necessary to premiſe the following definitions :

The starboard line of bearing, is that line upon which the ſhips of a fleet, being ranged, bear from each other upon a cloſe-hauled line, whatever courſe they may be steering ; and ſo that, upon hauling their wind or tacking together as may be necessary, the ſhips will be in a line cloſe-hauled upon the starboard tack.

The larboard line of bearing, is that line from which the ſhips of the fleet, by hauling their wind, or tacking together, may be formed in a line cloſe-hauled on the larboard tack.

A fleet of ſhips is ſaid to be in the *line a-breast* when the ſhips keels are parallel to each other, and their mainmasts in the same straight line.

The bow and quarter line, is when the ſhips are ranged in a straight line cutting their heels obliquely in the same angle: Hence at any intermediate ship, the ſhips towards one extre­mity of the line will be on the bow, and thoſe towards the other extremity will be on the quarter, of that ſhip.

If ſeveral ſhips stand on the same line and steer the same courſe, but different from that line, they are ſaid it be in *echiquier,* or c*hequerwise.*

Manœuvre in ſuccession, is when a fleet, ranged in one of the orders of sailing, and standing on the same line, the same manœuvre is ſuccessively performed by each ſhip as ſhe arrives at the wake of the van ſhip of the whole fleet, if in one line ; or of the van ſhip of her particular diviſion when divided into ſquadrons. So that a fleet tacks or veers, bears away or comes to the wind in ſuccession, when all the ſhips of every line execute, one after another, the same manœuvre on the same point of the wake of the leading ſhip.

The number of orders of sailing is commonly assumed to be five ; and denominated the fi*rst, second, third, fourth,* and *fifth* orders of sailing ; besides an order of *battle,* an order of *retreat,* &c.

@@@(a) The reaſon why Britain falls ſhort of the French in this reſpect, is, that in various sea-ports in France there are academies establiſhed for the expreſs purpoſe of educating thoſe intended for the navy in the various branches of naval ſcience; whereas, in Britain, there is only one academy establiſhed at the expence of government, namely, the Marine Academy at Portſmouth ; and, excepting navigation, ſcarcely any other branch of naval ſcience is taught in that ſeminary. It alſo requires great interest to be admitted. We are, indeed, well aware that there are boys educated for the ſea-ſervice in Christ’s Hoſpital, London, and at Greenwich ſchool, &c. The education there is not, however, adapted for officers in the navy, being only writing, arithmetic, a little mathematics necessary to understand navigation, and navigation.