unleſs it be a ſuperior officer ; the ſame precaution ſhall alſo be obſerved about any part of the ſhip catching fire.

Whilſt the fleets are engaged, the admiral carries but little ſail : in this, however, he muſt conduct himſelf by the motions of the enemy, the ſhips always obſerving to keep cloſe in the line ; and if any ſhip happen to get out of the line, the ſhip which immediately follows is to pay no regard to her, but endeavour to keep her ſtation in the line.

A captain muſt not quit his poſt in the line upon any pretence whatever, unleſs his ſhip ſhould be ſo greatly dama­ged as to render her incapable of continuing the action. The little ſail a fleet is under at ſuch a time may in gene­ral give the ſhips, though damaged in their rigging, &c. time enough to repair their deſects, without cauſing an unneceſſary interruption in the line, by withdrawing out of action when their service might perhaps be of the utmoſt importance to the reſt of the fleet

A captain, through too impetuous a deſire of diſtinguiſhing himſelf, ought never to break the order of the line, however inviting the advantage of an attack might then ap­pear to him to ſecure success : he muſt wait with patience the ſignal of the admiral or commanding officer of his diviſion, becauſe it is always more eſſential to preſerve and ſupport a cloſe line in action, as it conſtitutes the principal strength of a fleet in general, than to attend to a particular attack between two ſhips, which commonly decides but little with regard to the whole, however glorious in appear­ance, unless with a view at the ſame time of taking or destroying a flag ſhip of the enemy’s, and where ſuccess alone, even then, can juſtify the attempt.

The two immediate seconds to the admiral ought to di­rect part of their fire againſt the enemy’s flag-ſhip, or any other that may attack their admiral ; ſo that their chief at­tention ſhould be employed more in his defence than in that of their own proper ſhip, as they muſt ſacrifice every other conſideration to the honour of their flag.

The ſame attention muſt likewiſe be paid to any other ſhip that may find herſelf engaged with one of the enemy’s flag-ſhips ; the next to her ahead and aſtern ſhould serve in that reſpect as seconds, by dividing part of their fire againſt ſuch flag-officer, in order to make him ſtrike the sooner.

If any flag-officer ſtand in need of being aſſiſted, he will of course make a ſignal for the corps de reserve ; or if there ſhould be none, he will ſignify the ſame to his diviſion ; on which his two seconds, with those neareſt him, will close in to cover him, and continue the action. The frigates of his ſquadron will likewiſe be ready to give him the neceſſary aſſiſtance ; and if he ſhould ſtill continue the attack, he will in a particular manner be ſupported by his whole di­viſion.

Thoſe ſhips which happen to be most expoſed to danger will naturally make the ordinary signals upon the occaſion if they ſhould receive any hurt or damage, in order to be ſupported by ſuch of the line as are neareſt to them.

When a fleet is ſo far ſuperior in number as to be able to extend itſelf both ahead and aſtern considerably beyond the enemy’s line, the admiral generally forms the exceſs into a body of reserve, drawn up in a line on the other side of the fleet with reſpect to the enemy. If the body of reserve is to windward, the ſhips composing it are to be drawn up in a line with the frigates neareſt abreaſt of the centre ; but if to leeward, a little ahead of them ; being careful at the ſame time to keep within reach of obſerving diſtinctly all the signals and motions of the fleet, and to be ready to re­place ſuch of the ſhips as may happen to be diſmaſted or driven out of the line, where all intervals muſt be properly ſtrengthened, and carefully filled up again without loss of time. The body of reſerve is uſually formed at the ſame time with the line, to prevent any irregularity that may hap­pen on leaving any intervals or openings ; yet the admiral may draw ſhips out of the line to form a body of reſerve, according to the time and circumſtances of his situation.

The oldeſt captain, alter the senior officer who commands the body of reſerve, ought to relieve the firſt, or cloſe that part of the line which the diſabled ſhip has been obliged to quit; and so on succeſſively of the reſt.

The commanding officer of the body of reſerve will not be detached with the whole corps, unleſs on ſome preſſing occaſion, to fortify the line, where ſuch reinforcement is abſolutely neceſſary. If to defend one of the flag-officers of the three ſquadrons, he will be followed by the next senior officer of the reſerve who was not before detached, in order to place themſelves as seconds, the firſt ahead and the other astern of the flag they are to ſupport, with­out any diminution of the honour of his own proper ſe­conds at the ſame time, as they are only called in through neceſſity on that emergency, being not engaged before, and consequently better able to aſſiſt and ſupport the admiral ; their duty being likewiſe to exert their utmoſt efforts in at­tacking, or, if poſſible, in boarding, the enemy’s flag ſhip, to force him to yield, except they are particularly ordered off to ſome other quarter or part of the line.

The admiral will ſometimes order the whole body of re­ſerve to reinforce one of the three ſquadrons of the fleet, as he may see occaſion ; which, when he does, the body muſt make all the sail it can, that each ſhip may place herſelf ſucceſſively, the firſt in the firſt interval, the ſecond in the second interval, and so on throughout. If a part only of the body of reſerve is wanted, the proper ſignal will be made accordingly.

When the admiral has no further occaſion for the body of reſerve, he will make the proper ſignal for the ſhips composing it to reſume their reſpective posts in the line, and theſe ſhips will repeat the signals.

It any captain in the fleet think he can board with ſucceſs one of the enemy’s ſhips, he will ſignify the ſame to the admiral by hoiſting the boarding flag, together with his particular pendant, to be more plainly diſtinguiſhed : the admiral in return will make the proper ſignal of approba­tion, or otherwiſe if he diſapprove of the attempt, by let­ting fly that ſhip’s particular pendant that she may obſerve the ſignal the better. Before the captain make the ſignal, he ought to conſider well the ill conſequences that might attend ſuch an enterprise if he ſhould fail of ſucceſs ; for the breaking of the order or diſpoſition of the line, by quit­ting his poſt, may be of much greater diſadvantage to the whole, than any advantage ariſing from his victory, except that over a flag-ſhip.

When the admiral makes the ſignal for his fleet to pre­pare for action, the fire-ſhips will at the ſame time get ready their grappling-irons, fire-engines, &c. for boarding, and will likewiſe dispoſe all their combuſtibles into their proper channels of communication, &c. as ſoon as poſſible after the action begins : all which, when ready, they will take care to make known by ſignal to the particular diviſion or ſqua­dron they belong to, and they of courſe will repeat the ſame to the admirals.

The fire-ſhips muſt be particularly careful in placing themſelves out of the reach of the enemy’s guns, which they may do abreaſt and under ſhelter of their own ships in the line, and not in the openings between the ſhips, unless to prevent any of the enemy’s ſhips that ſhould attempt to force through their line, when they muſt in ſuch caſes uſe their utmoſt efforts to prevent them. They ought always