to be very attentive to the admiral's ſignals, as well as thoſe of the commanding officer of the particular ſquadron they belong to, that they may lose no time when the ſignal is made for them to act, which they muſt quickly anſwer by a ſignal in return.

Although no ſhip in the line ſhould be particularly ap­pointed to lead down or protect the fire-ſhips, beſides the frigates already ordered for that particular purpoſe; yet the ſhip ahead of which the fire-ſhip passes in her way to the enemy, whatever diviſion ſhe may belong to, is to eſcort her, and muſt aſſiſt her with a boat well manned and armed, as well as any other ſuccour ſhe may ſtand in need of : The two next ſhips to her muſt likewiſe give her all necessary aſſiſtance. The captain of a fire-ſhip is to conſider, in ſhort, that he is anſwerable for the event, in proportion as he ex­pects to be honourably rewarded if he ſucceed in ſo daring and hazardous an enterpriſe.

Since a general engagement of fleets or ſquadrons of men of war is nothing elfe than a variety of particular actions of single ſhips with each other, in a line of battle, it may not be improper to begin by deſcribing the latter, and then proceed to repreſent the uſual manner of conducting the former.

The whole economy of a naval engagement may be ar­ranged under the following heads ; namely, the *preparation,* the *action,* and the *repair* or *refitting* for the purpoſes of navigation.

The *preparation* is begun by iſſuing the orders to clear the ſhip for action, which is repeated by the boatſwain and his mates at all the hatchways or ſtaircaſes leading to the different batteries. As the management of the artillery, in a vessel of war, requires a considerable number of men, it is evident that the officers and ſailors muſt be retrained to a narrow ſpace in their uſual habitations, in order to preſerve the internal regularity of the ſhip. Hence the hammocs, or hanging-beds, of the latter are crowded together as cloſe as poſſible between the decks, each of them being limited to the breadth of 14 inches. They are hung parallel to each other, in rows ſtretching from one side of the ſhip to the other, nearly throughout her whole length, ſo as to admit of no paſſage but by stopping under them. As the cannon there­fore cannot be worked while the hammocs are ſuſpended in this ſituation, it becomes neceſſary to remove them as quickly as poſſible. By this circumſtance a double advantage is ob­tained : the batteries of cannon are immediately cleared of an encumbrance, and the hammocs are converted into a sort of parapet, to prevent the execution of ſmall-ſhot on the quarter-deck, tops, and forecaſtle. At the ſummons of the boatſwain, Up *all hammocs !* every sailor repairs to his own, and, having stowed his bedding properly, he cords it up firmly with a laſhing or line provided for that purpoſe. He then carries it to the quarter-deck, poop, or forecaſtle, or wherever it may be neceſſary. As each side of the quarter­deck and poop is furniſhed with a double network, ſupported by iron cranes fixed immediately above the gunnel or top of the ſhip’s side, the hammocs thus corded are firmly stowed by the quarter-maſter between the two parts of the netting, ſo as to form an excellent barrier. The tops, waiſte, and forecaſtle, are then fenced in the ſame manner.

Whilſt theſe offices are performed below, the boatſwain and his mates are employed in ſecuring the ſailyards, to pre­vent them from tumbling down when the ſhip is cannona­ded, as ſhe might thereby be diſabled and rendered incapable of attack, retreat, or purſuit. The yards are now likewiſe ſecured by ſtrong chains or ropes, additional to thoſe by which they arc usually ſuſpended. T'he boatſwain alſo pro­vides. the neceſſary materials to repair the rigging, where­ver it may be damaged by the ſhot of the enemy, and to supply whatever parts of it may be entirely deſtroyed. The carpenter and his mates, in the meanwhile, prepare ſhot- plugs and mauls, to cloſe up any dangerous breaches that may be made near the ſurface of the water ; and provide the iron-work neceſſary to refit the chain-pumps, in case their machinery ſhould be wounded in the engagement. The gunner with his mates and quarter-gunners is buſied in exa­mining the cannon of the different batteries, to see that their charges are thoroughly dry and fit for execution ; to have every thing ready for furniſhing the great guns and ſmall arms with powder as ſoon as the action begins ; and to keep a ſufficient number of cartridges continually filled, to ſupply the place of thoſe expended in battle. The maſter and his mates are attentive to have the sails properly trimmed, according to the ſituation of the ſhip ; and to re­duce or multiply them, as occaſion requires, with all poſſible expedition. The lieutenants viſit the different decks, to ſee that they are effectually cleared of all encumbrance, ſo that nothing may retard the execution of the artillery ; and to enjoin the other officers to diligence and alertneſs, in ma­king the neceſſary diſpoſitions for the expected engage­ment, ſo that everything may be in readineſs at a moment’s warning.

When the hoſtile ſhips have approached each other to a competent nearneſs, the drums beat to arms : The boat­ſwain and his mates pipe, A*ll hands to quarters!* at every hatchway : All the perſons appointed to manage the great guns immediately repair to their reſpective ſtations : The crows, handſpikes, rammers, spunges, powder-horns, matches, and train tackles, are placed in order by the side of every cannon : The hatches are immediately laid, to prevent any one from deſerting his poſt by eſcaping into the lower apart­ments : The marines are drawn up in rank and file on the quarter-deck, poop, and forecaſtle : The laſhings of the great guns are caſt looſe, and the tompions withdrawn: The whole artillery, above and below, is run out at the ports, and levelled to the point-blank range, ready for fi­ring-

The neceſſary preparations being completed, and the of­ficers and crew ready at their reſpective ſtations to obey the order, the commencement of the action is determined by the mutual diſtance and ſituation of the adverſe ſhips, or by the ſignal from the commander in chief of the fleet or ſquadron. The cannon being levelled in parallel rows projecting from the ſhip’s side, the most natural order of battle is evidently to range the ſhips abreaſt of each other, especially if the en­gagement is general. The most convenient diſtance is pro­perly within the point-blank range of a muſket, ſo that all the artillery may do effectual execution.

The combat usually begins by a vigorous cannonade, ac­companied with the whole efforts of the ſwivel-guns and the ſmall arms. The method of firing in platoons, or volleys of cannon at once, appears inconvenient in the sea-service,and perhaps ſhould never be attempted unleſs in the batter­ing of a fortification. The ſides and decks of the ſhip, al­though ſufficiently ſtrong for all the purpoſes of war, would be too much ſhaken by ſo violent an exploſion and recoil. The general rule obſerved on this occaſion throughout the ſhip, is to load, fire, and ſpunge the guns with all poſſible expedition, yet without confuſion or precipitation. The captain of each gun is particularly enjoined to fire only when the piece is properly directed to its object, that the ſhot may not be fruitlessly expended. The lieutenants, who command the different batteries, traverſe the deck to ſee that the battle is proſecuted with vivacity ; and to exhort the men to their duty. The midſhipmen second theſe in­junctions, and give the neceſſary aſſiſtance, wherever it may be required, at the guns committed to their charge. The