vening 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.

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 of wind to detach the fly from the staff.

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 de­sirable 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 amongst 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 se­lect 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. 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 delivered to every private ship. In

the first, the evolutions, movements, and other operations of service, are set down in one column, and their correspond­ing signals in another. The first column is arranged, either alphabetically, by the distinguishing phrase, or systemati­cally, according to the arrangement of the sailing and fight­ing instructions. The officer whose duty it is to make the signals turns to this column for the order which he is to communicate, and in the other column he finds the appro­priated signal.

In the other book, which is consulted for the interpreta­tion of the signals, they are arranged in the leading column, either by the flags, or by the places of their exhibition. The first is the best method, because the derangement of the flag­ship’s masts and rigging in time of action may occasion a change in the place of the signal.

The *Tactique Navale* of the Chevalier de Morogues con­tains a very full and elaborate treatise on signals. We re­commend this work to every sea-officer, as full of instruction. The art of signals has been greatly simplified since the pub­lication of this work, but we cannot but ascribe much of the improvements to it. We believe that the author is the in­ventor of that systematic manner of addressing the order or effective signal to the different squadrons and divisions of the fleet, by which the art of signals is made more concise, the execution of orders is rendered more systematic, and the commanders of private ships are accustomed to consider themselves as parts of an army, with a mutual dependence and connection. We are ready enough to acknowledge the superiority of the French in manoeuvring, but we affect to consider this as an imputation on their courage. Nothing can be more unjust; and dear bought experience should long ere now have taught us the value of this superiority. What avails that courage which we would willingly arrogate to our­selves, if we cannot come to action with our enemy, or must do it in a situation in which it is almost impossible to suc­ceed, and which needlessly throws away the lives of our gal­lant crews ? Yet this must happen, if our admirals do not make evolutions their careful study, and our captains do not habituate themselves, from the first hoisting a pendant, to consider their own ship as connected with the most remote ship in the line. We cannot think that this view of their situation would in the least lessen the character which they have so justly acquired, of fighting their ship with a courage and firmness unequalled by those of any other nation. And we may add, that it is only by such a rational study of their profession, that the gentleman can be distinguished from the mercenary commander of a privateer.

II. *Night Signals.*

It is evident, that the communication of orders by night must be more difficult and more imperfect than by day. We must, in general, content ourselves with such orders as are necessary for keeping the fleet together, by directing the more general movements and evolutions which any change of circumstances may render necessary. And here the di­vision and subordinate arrangement of the fleet is of indis­pensable necessity, it being hardly possible to particularise every ship by a signal of address, or to see her situation. The orders are therefore addressed to the commanders of the different divisions, each of whom is distinguished by his poop and top-lights, and is in the midst of, and not very re­mote from, the ships under his more particular charge. Yet even in this unfavourable situation, it is frequently neces­sary to order the movements of particular ships. Actions during the night are not uncommon. Pursuits and rallyings are still oftener carried on at this time. The common dan­gers of the sea are as frequent and more disastrous. The system of signals therefore is very incomplete till this part be accomplished.

Night signals must be made by guns, or by lights, or by both combined.